

NOTES FROM NATURE'S LYRE

REED



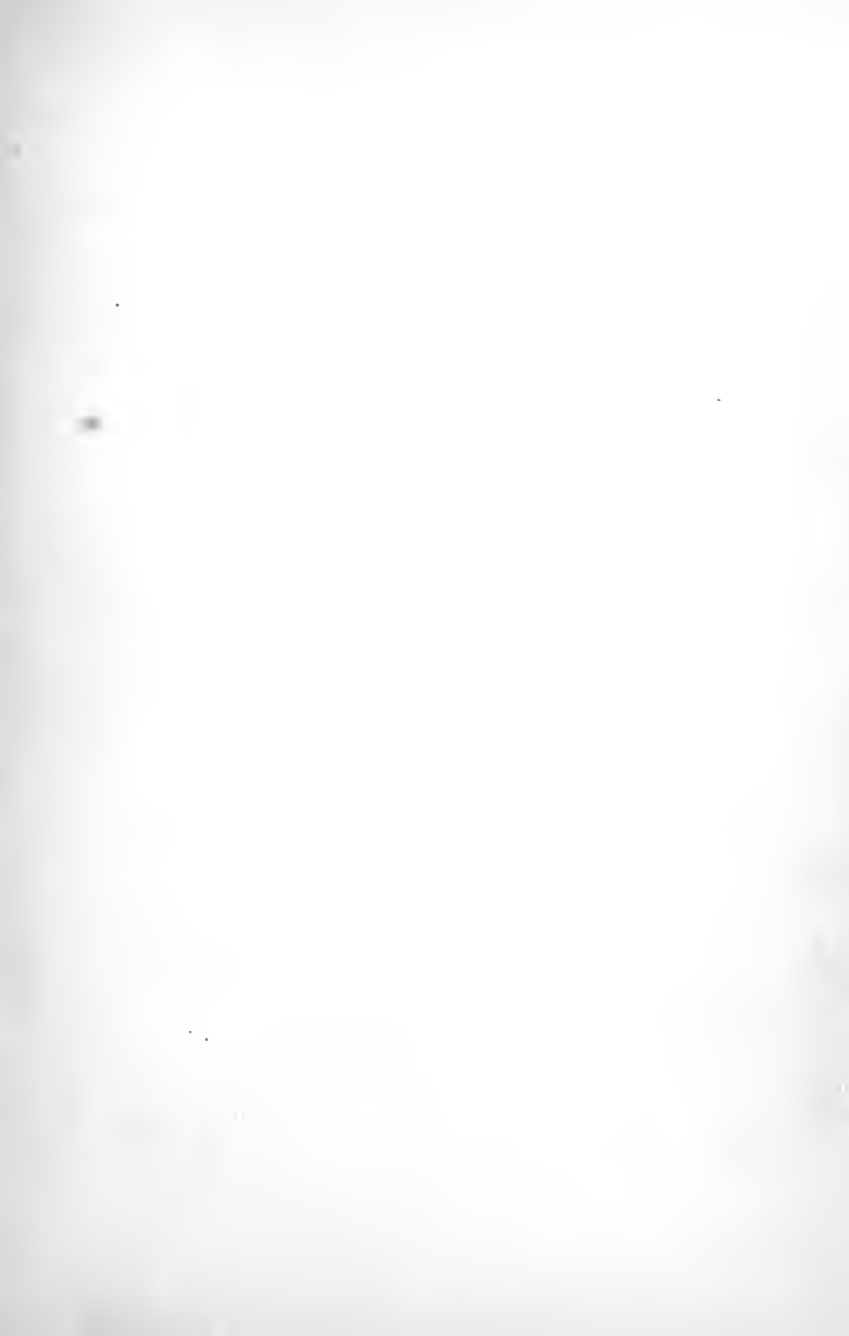


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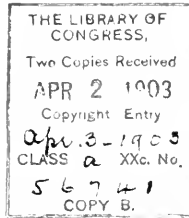
Notes from Nature's Lyre

By
Howard Beck Reed



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BY
HOWARD BECK REED

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DEDICATION

WHOM better, dearest, could I dedicate
 These verses to
 Than you, who from my earliest date
 The longing drew
 To thank you for that patient love and
 sweet,
 Uplifting me
 To higher, higher spheres, to be more meet
 For loving thee?

One day I, dearest, plucked for you
 A bunch of heather-bells,
 But, looking, found them wet with dew.
 I feared they were not fit to give,
 You said it was the damp that made them
 live,
 Those drops from sorrow's wells.

These simple songs in love I made
 A tribute small for you.
 But unwept memories soon will fade,
 And true I found these wet with tears.

You took them, praised them, sweetly
smoothed my fears
And dried my teared eyes too.

Take, I know thou wilt never chide,
'T is not like thee;
But open arms with mother's pride
These beggared, plaintive poems bide
As thou dost me.

And all I am or e'er will be
I owe to thee,
Who if my heart sometimes must weep
Woulds't give thy life those tears to keep!
They 're not from thee,

MY MOTHER.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	xi
INVOCATION OF THE MUSES	I
INSPIRATION	3
INVITATION TO NATURE-STUDY	7
SEÑORITA JUANA	13

SEASONS

LAY TO THE WEST WIND	47
A RESTLESS SUMMER EVENING	50
WINTER	52
THE BREAKING OF THE BUDS	53
THE CHRISTMAS TREE	55
PROPHECIES OF SPRING	57
MY FLOCKS	58
FROST	60
'T IS TIME THE THRUSH TRAVELS HOME	62
THE GRASSHOPPERS	64
THE FIREFLY	66
THE BROKEN BOUGH'S LAMENT	68
MY VALENTINE	73
THE LABORER'S SONG	75
NEW YEAR'S EVE	77
A DULL DAY	78
A SUMMER SHOWER	80
A PRISONER	82
A BUTTERFLY	84

SCATTERED PETALS

	PAGE
THE SPEECHLESS SERMON	89
MUSIC	95
THE DEVON COAST	97
THE SAILOR'S STORY	99
THE TALE OF TAWAH	102
AN INDIAN SAGA OF THE MOUND-BUILDERS	108
ALIENI TEMPORIS FLORES	112
ONLY A WHITE ROSE	119
A SONG OF THE SOUTH	121
THE CHARM OF THE BROOK	123
DYING DANNIE	125
THE ATLANTIC	128
SHAKESPEARE	131
HIDDEN SORROW	133
A PAINTING BY A FRIEND	136
SIMPLE WORSHIP	138
AT TWILIGHT	140
THE AMŒBA	141
THE WHIP-POOR-WILL	142
THE HILLS OF CLIFTON, ENGLAND	144
ECCLESIASTES XI., 1	146
THE PHYSICIAN	147
ON THE RIVER	148
A WINDY DAY	150
OUR MARTYRED STATESMAN	151
LORD, GIVE US CHEER	154
A NATURE PARADOX	155
'T IS PROFITABLE	156
THE HERMIT-THRUSH	157
VICTORIA	159
LONGFELLOW	160
THE FOREST FIRE	162
A TEXT FOR THOUGHT	165

Contents

vii

	PAGE
THE CYNIC	166
SPEAKING	168
LOUIS J. AGASSIZ	170
LOST IN THE WOODS	172
THE VIOLIN	173
MANDOLIN MEMORIES	177
SLEEPING BEAUTY ON THE LAKE	179
THE STORM NEAR THE CORNISH COAST	181
THE SARGOSSA SEA	182
THIS BAB-EL-MANDEB	183
FORGET-ME-NOT	184
ZOÖLOGY	186
THE MATCH BOY	188
THE WRECK	191
THE HEAVENLY SOLDIER'S HOPE	193
A TRAGEDY	194
"MEDITATION, DAY AND NIGHT"	196
DESPAIR NOT	197
EULOGY	198
THE SARACEN TO HIS SWORD	200
THE MEXICAN MAID	201
THE MEETING-HOUSE	203
DREAMS	206
HIDDEN BEAUTY	208
BOATING SONG	209
NATURE'S OWN NATION	210
PRAYER	212
THE OCEAN OF LIFE	213
THE HAPPY DEAD	215
UNLOVED	217
GEOLOGIC MAN	220
I LOVE HIM YET	222
TO LOVE	223
MY MOTHER	224
ROMAN RELICS IN ENGLAND	225

	PAGE
FATHER	228
A STONE FROM SOLOMON'S TEMPLE	229
AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A PIECE OF COAL	232
A NAME	235
VOICES	236

SONNETS

FRIENDSHIP	239
FUTURITY	244
WESTMINSTER ABBEY	247
CHILDREN	248
WOMAN	249
MILTON	250
FAREWELL	253
WHAT A POEM IS	255
FICKLE GOLD	256
A GLIMPSE OF PARADISE BUT BREEDS DESIRE	257
" THE SPARROW "	258
YESTERDAY AND TO-MORROW	259
WALES	262
FRANCE	263
LIFE	264
DANTE	265
BOTANY	266
MELANCHOLY	267
THE ANT	269
MY BOOKS	270
SOLITUDE	271
BEN NEVIS, SCOTLAND	272
MY JONATHAN	273
THE FARMER	274
THE WISTARIA	275
MY MOODS	276

Contents

ix

FROM THE KETTLE ON THE CRANE		PAGE
FROM THE KETTLE ON THE CRANE		281
WHEN PUSSY PURRS		284
THE PHONOGRAPH		286
AN OLD MAN'S MUSINGS		288
MY ENLISTING		290
THE FAMILY CLOCK		291
WAIT		293
READING		295
TWILIGHT ON THE FARM		297
WHY?		300
IGNORANT EMIGRATION		303

JOTS FOR LITTLE TOTS

BABYLAND	307
THE BUMBLE-BEES' SONG	309
A CHILDREN'S SURPRISE PARTY	310
WHAT BABY SAW	312
LULLABY	313
MY WORK IS DONE	315
BABY AND THE CATERPILLAR	317
BABY'S SKY	319
THE MOTHERLESS DOLL	321
FLY AWAY HOME	323
THE HOME OF THE THRUSH	324

TRIFLES

EPITAPH TO MY VERSES	329
OUR INHERITANCE	330
THE SHEARS OF ATROPOS	331
MY FIREPLACE	332
SAMBO'S TROUBLES	333
THE LITERATURE OF THE SEA-BEACH	335
LOGARITHMS	337
ODE TO JOHN JONES	338



INTRODUCTION

MANKIND owes an inestimable debt to God for His terrestrial gifts which surround us, as well as for His heavenly ones which are to come. In the preparation for the enjoying of the future ones the logical way is to notice and appreciate those which now exist. It is not well for even the most ambitious to overlook in scorn the caterpillar of earthly graces while putting forth his utmost efforts in attempting to grasp the fleeing butterfly of the future. The one is the gradual development of the other, and that which has grown slowly is generally more perfectly formed than that which has developed quickly. But aside from its obligatory character—and man is rarely inclined to meet an obligation—there is a something innate in every one that prompts a study of nature, an irresistible drawing toward the beauty and wonderfulness of creation. And if a man so neglect this incentive as to give the natural beauties of his home but a cursory glance,

he misses one half that which this life holds in store for him. We have used appreciation and study as synonymous terms, and are they not nearly so? What can we understand fully enough to give it proper value unless we study it part by part until we understand every component? And study with this aim in view is not irksome, it is more a recreation than a work. On the other hand, what can we study unless we have enough appreciation of its worth to add interest and to overcome its apparent homeliness?

What do we understand by this nature-study? Is it to become, like Timon of Athens, an anchorite and bury oneself from the world? Not at all; it simply means an open eye and a retentive mind while passing through that strip of wood, or a listening ear eager for the song of the robin or the thrush as we in the transaction of our business pass along some country road. There is no need of deposing the grand sentiment of sociology and becoming a recluse. Unconditional solitude is but for the shipwrecked sailor or the misanthropist. For the latter we feel a hearty sympathy, who, disdaining all social pleasures, keeps company but with himself, and that self is sufficient cause to make him

sick of the world. We mean one who whenever the chance is given puts himself in touch with the unartificial world.

But not wishing to weary you with a thesis from a prejudiced mind, let us briefly review a few blessings that nature-study gives us. In the alembic of the free woods all base metals of character are changed into the pure gold of noble living. And this effect, gained from being in the great forest, is similarly found in that small clump of trees, perhaps your only available glimpse of nature. Nearly the same birds have their choir-stand there, and certainly the same rule governs the growing of the flowers and the trees. And even if it be but a potted plant in your window, there is material for your natural study. In the forest there seems to be a certain element which city air has not; one feels his heart throb with inspiration and joy; he is practically a new man. And not only is there a marked exuberance of spirits, but he feels himself literally elevated in his very being. His heart grows tender toward humanity in general. Many a dishonorable business scheme has been discounted and forestalled during an outing in the woods; it is no place for unseemly

thoughts and we are almost awed if they encroach upon our attention. And this brotherly love is not fleeting; the man who pays most attention to the non-dissembling side of the world seems to possess the greatest quantity of this homely but valued quality. All the virtues might be shown to grow in the same way from nature-study, but we think it sufficient to mention only this one; for of all the commandments, "Love thy neighbor" is the most important, with the exception of the first, and to that we shall for a moment direct our attention.

Not only does this appreciative study elevate us morally, but spiritually are we lifted in wonder from Nature to Nature's God. For that should be the object of all study. There has never been a thinker who has brought the motives of the actions of objects, whether in the inanimate or animate world, to a tangible form. All phenomena can be traced to a certain point and there our discernment fails us. Therefore is it a perfectly natural result and one that is compatible with the character of even the most practical scientist to leave the research as completed and refer the cause of the phenomena under question to the Maker. And

is it not a sufficient incentive to nature-study, when man declares that he is finite and lacking in knowledge, but God infinite and omniscient? And everywhere we seem to hear from Nature the psalms of praise to the Creator, and from every twig and every blade, every mount and every glade, we seem to hear those dear words of exhortation spoken by our Maker and drawn from Nature, "Flee as a bird to your mountain."

HOWARD BECK REED.



INVOCATION OF THE MUSES

O MUSE, lend me thy tuneful lyre,
Save me a single string of fire
From harp you kindly gave, entire,
To him who wrought "The Thoughtful
Man "

And others of a kin. Inspire
One little line to live so long
As marvellous fame of forenamed song,
That wisdom shrinks a wondrous wealth
Within a space so small. If mind
Can't catch from one of Nine by stealth
A single song, canst thou not find
A Tenth I pray, Pierides?
And dub her Mea as a name
With Latin meaning meant. The same
Initiate my pensive pen
With Nature's notes, that I 'mong men
May bear the joy-emburdened hymn
Thou teachest tuneful thrush and lark;
That I may show to others Him,
And lifting from the blinding dark,

2 Invocation of the Muses

Point through transparent Nature-veil
Where God, Creator, sits as did
At first, while watching power prevail,
The Master Mind pronounced it good.
He shaped the whirling wings of fire,
And flung the floods to quench that fire;
Triumphant taught the watery tide
Respect, and bade retire to rest
In place apart. There, raging wide,
Sore piqued to see the lording land
Uplift its head above their waves,
Twice, thrice, victorious warfare planned.
A long time Earth and Sea now strive
At hide-and-seek. Till God from place
Of watching other planets form,
To please gave each allotted space.
Erato, Clio, now inform
My mind with art, and power bequeath,
In songs the faithful fragrance breathe
That winds waft wastefully from the flowers:
And trace my page with tree that towers
Above the wealthy wood. So paint
My work that many raptured seek
From mirrored image mine, though faint
The beauties, copied made so weak.

INSPIRATION

ALONG the banks of bubbling brooks
I wander, while my searching eye
Is bent discussing green-knolled nooks
Or silver-shining streams, that fly
Before mine eye in endless chain,
As scroll slips through, in thinking skein
With wire-born words, the Ticker wise;
Improved child of telegraph.
Where Nature in repose e'er lies,—
The black Piceus¹ ploughs his path,
Distastefully flings from armored back
The water scarce his sphere. The track
Of thirsty deer and wildcat 's here.

What thoughts are these in love so clear
But to expression tightly bound?
O Muses! make a magic force
To turn my thought to meaning sound,
Convert my words, so tiring hoarse,

¹ *Hydropheus piceus*,—a large beetle that dwells in the water but is a very clumsy swimmer. It does seem as though it was not intended for an aquatic insect.

To music sweet and clear. Each eve
Of summer brings to me a breeze,
With notes that sweet sonatas weave
On delicate keys, the leaves of trees.
Each eve of winter howls the wind
When unwonted opposition 's lined
In antique-fashioned fireplace grim,
It noisily climbs the chimney's side
With wrathful whispers or howls of pain
As driven back by heat inside;
Then fitfully flings itself in rage
Upon the shadow of the fire
Reflected on the window-pane. They bring
Not lines as from a Lydian lyre,
But rugged pibroch of Scotland sing.
As comrades in a war are drawn
To closer love from common risk
And perils shared, the fire and I
Grow dearer friends and oftener seek
Each other's company. Birds fly,
As legend-like with naughty tales
To mother's ears, to me with news;
With news that never fails.
I love to read this simple ruse:
They bring within their bills a sign,
A whisp of hay, a twig of vine.
A stem that 's not outgrown its green
Brings the tidings of the spring,

And birds that South have wintering been,
 And now search stuff for home-building.
 But stem of age that 's burnished brown,
 Lost from their beaks comes fluttering down,
 In silence heralds the new-mown hay,
 The reaping-reign of autumn day.
 The moon when bathing all in light
 Bright argent-hued, or muffed in mist,
 Or blanketed from Terra's sight
 With banks of choking clouds. Dismissed
 From Earth yet starry-coronet crowned,
 In double form the queen of night,
 Does Cassiopeia gather round
 A retinue, displacing her
 Oft given the regal-rule of night.
 But both bow down with obeisance due
 At my imagination's throne,
 From godly power in mercy loan
 The themes that hold in tenure tight
 Attention of my inmost soul,
 Unable quite though wish would write.
 From God's creation as a whole
 Moves most mysterious force, so full
 Of messages unseen, unheard,
 Must e'en unwritten be. Our furred
 And feathered friends know when to nest,
 And when to seek securer seats,
 And when to 'scape the storm that 's dressed

Not yet within its wrecking winds.
Yet busy man knows naught to do
Or how 't is done. Nor can construe
The thrills that Nature e'er inspires,
As wisdom-waiting world inquires.
When summer zephyrs softly sigh,
Or winter's roaring wind blows high,
Minerva, goddess of the mind
And, too, by many more enshrined
Of Science, poesy, and arts,
Give power to stay the force that starts
With minute moves my sluggish mind.
My faculties, let Nature find
Attentive as the crowd that heard
Italian Zeno wise propound
His master's thought, Parmenides.
With zeal let all my Life be crowned
Translating Nature-mysteries.

.

INVITATION TO NATURE-STUDY

NATURE pleadingly calls from her beautiful bowers,
From her sweetly entrancing schools,
Where the pens are the sunbeams, and the
books are the flowers,
And her ink stands as rain in the pools.

All the year, as she calls for more pupils, she
paints
Pretty pictures on each flowery page;
To seduce to her school those whose interest
is cool,
And to give us who love her our wage.

By the sweetest refrains of the birds she
invites,
By the singing of stream and of brook,
And the stars, the entrancing play-suns of the
nights,
Are prospectus, she asks you to look.

8 Invitation to Nature-Study

When the winter's cold session is on there 's
the snow,—

Cotton-plant of the sky, dropping leaves,
Holding pentagram marvels whose tale you
should know,

And the tree-covering carpet of wonder
it weaves:—

When the streamlets are guarded by glass
window-panes,

Where they shivering wait for the rains;
But they 're happy, so happy they cannot
forget,

Though asleep, Nature 's guarding them
yet.

'T is in winter, enthroned o'er the scenery
sublime

In her grandest attire, Nature reigns;
As she audience gives, in this stern, courtly
time,

With dew-jewels they construct for her
fanés.

Beauty's fanés that are formed by the
feathery snow-flakes,

That, reflecting the light, look like minia-
ture moons;

Invitation to Nature-Study 9

In their flight through the kingdom of stars
each one takes

Of star-form and starlight. Where are
lovelier festoons?

Then there 's spring, when the winter is
wearing away,

When the sunbeams awake for their play;
And they knock on that tiny brown cell
'neath the fence,

Where all winter it clung for defense.

Soon a hole 's in it seen, then a head slow
appears,

That is followed by legs and four wings.
Have the sunbeams made true the Greek-
storied Sun-Gods?

Is 't a child of Apollo with too many
wings?

And the wings it unwraps, they are wet, I
believe;

Have the sunbeams it brought on their
waves?

For we 're told that the light from the sun,
like a sea

Travels down to the earth washed by
waves.

10 Invitation to Nature-Study

'T is a moth, he 's forerunner of millions to
come,

And the bees with their heart-happy hum
Join in song with the moths, though the
latter are dumb,

'T is a truth, there are hymns oft from
mouths that are mum.

All the trees, tired of garments of white,
dress in green;

On the branch where the snow-buds have
been

And have burst into leaves, if we search,
may be seen

Many birds both of blue, and of red, and
of green.

Now the spring is of summer the plan—not
matured—

Nature 's setting the scene for the act
That contains her best thought, the most
interesting part,

Through the luring of spring thus she
wins us by tact.

On the stage of the summer she shows us
results

Of the laboring year that is flown;

Invitation to Nature-Study 11

And creation with friends, Nature's pupils,
exults

At the progress of work that is shown.

In her temples of oak and of pine and of
beech

Gives her baccalaureate speech,

And a choir of sweet voices invisible sings

The class ode of the birds and the springs.

In the autumn we leave our school tasks in
the past,

And enter in business at last;

With the lessons we've learned in the seasons
of toil

To harvest the fruits of our soil.

Won't you come to this sweetly entrancing
school

From the city and stifling crowd,
To the far-reaching woods so refreshing and
cool,

And where wandering is ever allowed?

See, it's teeming with wonders that cannot
be told!

Just a glance and she charms with her
power,

12 Invitation to Nature-Study

As each moment new-founded mysteries
unfold

That hypnotic smooth over many an
hour.

Come, view what He has given,

The beauteous gifts of God.

All joy is not for Heaven

And the earth for chastening rod,

For Nature's beauty-clad

And smiling with happiness.

Yes, she will make you glad,

While the Maker, He will bless.

SEÑORITA JUANA

CANTO I.

'T WAS twilight time, when day and
night contend

On even terms for darkness or for light,
And struggling softly, silently, they
lend

Vistas of brightness overtrimmed with
night.

As clinging cloudlets cluster round the
sky

Peep out from the dark when a storm
is nigh.

Thus at the close of a hot, hot day
Soft steeped in the shadows Mitla lay,
A spot in the drear plain's dry waste

10. Where Oaxaca's road, as the story
reads,

To the old Cortez-conceived city leads.

This Aztec temple, pre-pyramid born,

Now stands of all its former beauty
shorn,

A shapely pile of walls and pillars hoar
That dreams of Past but hears its song
no more;

A meteor from the distant heights of
Past

That, rushing through its friction, finds
at last

A cool and restful refuge from all strife,
Bathed in all peace since now it's lived
its life.

20. Against a mossy pillar, moonbeam lit,
As graceful as on the flowers serene
The azure Asteriæ sweets-sipping sit,
A Mexican maid does listening lean.
Brushes 'way the hair that, jet black,
Unfettered, pads the hard supporting-
back,
Thus clears to view the faultless fore-
head broad,
Subtends the dreamy, drinking eyes,
now awed
By the holy place, in sleeping silence
bathed.
And the red lips so delicately lathed
30. That with two trickling tears were
bathed,
Quivering, bespoke the fear she felt
unshown.

- At last an approaching footstep heard,
And a figure stepped where the moon-
light shone,
And "Juana, Juana," gently called,
she heard.
She moved to meet him with motion
as light
As a fourth-year osier by breeze is bent.
Love's greeting past, he speaks in voice
so slight
She closer clings to catch the word,
silent,
Attentive, as only from Love's lexicon
is learnt.
40. "Before the sun o'er Orizaba's peak
Doth climb leave I, my fortune, yours,
to seek.
(Sweet Juana, how can I from thee
depart,
The nearest and the dearest to my
heart ?)
The dangers of the wilds have I to
meet;
May the Holy Mother guide my feet!
But the padre"—dark flashed his angry
eye—
"Hath driven me from the nest to live
or die,

He cares not. My folks forbade me to
come

Or be seen near yours, near Juana's
home.

50. But when I rich in gold and honor am,
Answer they all to Leon de Tamat-
quam."

Darker came his eye and knowing laid
his hand

On jewelled hilt, in belt the richest in
the land.

"Leon, must you really so soon de-
part?"

Asked she with tearful eye and heavy
heart.

"Why shouldst thou go at all, Leon,
from home,

Through barbarous lands and countless
dangers roam?

Why not the padre, who bades for
best, please

And marry the wealthy Donna Du-
quese?"

60. Her lips lisped "Yes," but her heart
heard "No."

"Señorita!"

"'T is best, Leon, for us to part I
know,

For I a simple market maid at best,
And you a prince, so Fate hath formed
our nest.

I know thou lovest me well and that to
part

Would mar your future, hide your
happiness.

List, Leon, how strange seems this
truth untold:

That if we love, with love whose great
deepness

To our unthinking friends cannot be
seen

70. They think that we but for a moment
lean,

And 'tween our aching hearts a hand
they thrust

And then that we forget it soon they
trust;

Little aware that we for hence are dead
As we have lost Life's little golden
thread.

Ah, may the Lord forgive for lives
they took;

What thinkest thou, Caro, must a part-
ing look

We take and go our separate ways
alone?

Let love not speak but thought for it
atone.

For oft we must an act for duty do

80. That is adverse and may for us bring
rue."

He answered not, but took her in his
arms,

Where she her brave words soon for-
got; in arms

She nestled and never a word was
passed,

But in such times a look has meaning
vast.

Then softly disengaged his hold and
spoke:

"Mia Carissima, I must now fly
As does the downy dove for food, so I
My Juana leave. But listen, Love, to
me:

'Fore the autumn feast is for harvest
spread

90. (If Mother Mary minds my *miserère*)
In just six months return I thee to
wed."

Then held her close and whispered
words to soothe,

To try their parting's sorrow thus to
smooth.

Then kissed and with a sob said last
adieu,
Strode sadly on, and soon was lost to
view.
Juana sighed soft and homeward made
her way
Just as the sky hung out the sign of
day,
And dark reluctant, leaving Mitla's
side,
Gave way to gray, that soon was lost to
glide
100. To the deeper blue that marks the
nearing morn,
In other light the ruins to adorn.

CANTO II.

With heavy heart did Juana now pro-
ceed
To her meagre little hut, where she
alone
With widowed mother lived, too poor
indeed
The proverbial sombrero and horse to
own.
But fate decreed that she in her sorrow
Should not be left in peace, for 'fore

- She reached the tiny yard the first in row
That stood before the huts in number
four,
There stepped in Juana's path a man,
mid-aged,
10. Whose dress bespoke a soldier, and the
coat
Of blue was marked on sleeve with
captain's bars.
But from his eye a gleam there shot
that mars
The best impression gained by noble
clothes,
And there was something of the snake
in pose
That tends the doubting mind to rise
and stand
'Tween hate and friendship; one who
we our hand
'T were better at his throat than in his
palm.
Then Juana saw and stopped, near lost
her calm,
For well she knew that James McCreer
no good
20. To any maiden of her caste could do.
He spoke, his voice the same struck on
her ear

- As sight of subtile cobra's awful hood.
In accents soft he asks about her home
Which might, had she such sorrow not
to stand,
In her mind him raise to a loftier dome.
Ah, now these words increased sorrow's
demand
And his ensuing words but to her gave
Chaos, as though she stood in some
closed cave
'Mid oceans of noise whose vibrating
waves
30. Beat the ear as billows on a sandy shore
Unceasing in heaps the sand-like sound
paves.
And with a sob she passed from out his
sight,
So great her grief, looked not to left or
right
Till on her poor, hard bed herself she flung
And, as we all sometimes, her sorrows
sung.
- Juana rose at nine from sleepless bed
With sign of suffering in eyes of red,
But passed her mother's fond and anx-
ious gaze
With a kiss and set about to cook their
maize.

40. Their simple meal in silence deep was
 spent,
For Juana's thoughts but to Leon were
 lent.
But he she slighted on return spent no
Such sober hours; when met at dawn
 he 'd just
From all night drink with many a quar-
 rel and blow,
Now angered at the girl's unhid distrust,
He thought of one he hoped could give
 him aid.
And while he walked his rage in oaths
 he said,
And switched the slender sabadilla
 leaves
As at a foe. This friend where now he
 went
50. Was he who owned and held the house
 for rent
That Juana occupied. And here he
 learned
That which he on his way so much had
 yearned:
Behind in rent, he had them at his
 power.
A formal edict passed (while Justice
 slept

- Her scales were transferred to her eyes),
out stept
Poor Juana and her madre old; their
pride
(They were not peons born) upheld
them well.
But at the sale when McCreer gained
her side,
The poor girl understood the workings
well,
60. But once again refused to give him ear.
Now dragged a time too full of suffering
deep
To disgrace by numbering for amuse-
ment's sake.
In the market was sustenance eked out
dear
With work and tear. How Juana
robbed from sleep
In prayer for help: If Leon were only
here!
One day while selling tamales in the
street
Señora de Tamatquam passed that way.
She stopped the coach, with gold and
lace replete,
And smiled at her in sweetest motherly
way.

70. She 'd never met the maid whom Leon
loved
And knew not this was she. 'T is hard
to say,
But she was also like an April day,
That darkens, storms, while yet the sun
is seen,
For proud, o'erbearing was her mien.
But Juana, glad to meet a friendly
aid,
Made courtesy, held the tray for her to
buy.
Señora, struck with bearing of the
maid,
Stepped from her coach, and yet she
knew not why.
"Mia Cara, wouldst like to work for
me?"
80. Ah, would she! Now her madre need
but rest.
She answered "Yes" with eager childish
glee.
How oft by some mirage we 're has-
tened on,
By some base metal led to think it
gold,
And when it 's gained we feverish plead
and pawn

To secure the sage's stone, alembic
mold,
That shapes mere brass to highest
valued gold.
She stepped within the coach as in a
trance,
As when from theatre's charm we reach
the street
'T is like the action of a dream. Maid
Chance
90. For several weeks seemed well to guide
her feet
In reformation's path. The señora sel-
dom seen,
The others kind to her, could Juana
glean
A comfort life for madre and herself.
But ah, that Maid clothed like a Comus-
elf
Could naught but trifle if she would.
One day
While Juana was at knitting 'gaged
She felt the charm, the silent, secret
sway
Of being watched, and glancing from
her work,
She starts in terror joined with strange
surprise:—

100. Señora like an angry jaguar stands,
Her eyes ablaze, her hands tight
clenched; her size
Seemed godly in its passioned height;
her hands
Outstretched, she spake in hoarse and
choking tones:
“That ring, thou wretched peon, who
gave thee that?
Little thought that I a thief had here
enthroned!”
At “thief,” that word a challenge
world around,
Glanced Juana at her hand and circlet
there
By Leon placed and their betrothal
crowned.
And with the force of nobleness all
bear
110. Who sorrow o’er a severed love if true,
Threw back señora’s glance, who could
but stare,
And then her eyes fell as the other’s
grew
And flamed from character of truth
and pure.
“My birth ’s as good as yours, Señora,
you ’re

- The thief who steals from life two persons' joy.
How dost thou answer to thy God?
Your boy
Was given you to make happy, how,
How is this duty done? Is your own
mind
So potent in its thought as not to bow
120. Before the heart whose promptings are
from God?"
- With that she left the house pride-
wounded shod.
Señora sat long deep engaged in
thought;
Already something nearly love had
wrought
For Juana deep regard. The love that
he
The victim feels when truthful noble-
ness
Is led to speak his wrath. Señor at
tea
When sat the lonesome two heard her
confess;
And wounded pride was nearly over-
ruled
By sorrow caused by son's forced leave
from home.

130. And so, if now it could be done, they
schooled
Themselves to all forget. How oft we
roam
Regretful, in the after years, and look
To help the woe we 've caused by
thoughtless word!
But already Juana had the town for-
sook,
Of her could not the slightest trace be
heard.

CANTO III.

'T was midway 'tween the noontime
and the eve,
When daylight, cloyed with sight of
striving earth,
Seems to grow weary and attempts to
weave
A cloud-web o'er the dazzling sun,
whose dearth
Of sympathy makes suffering so intense
Within the tropic clime, it cooler grows,
And light is partially dimmed by fleecy
fence.
'T was in this meagre respite from the
heat,—

- For the Peruvian night is worse than
day,
10. Her blanket thrown o'er Nature head
and feet
Is stifling in its closely wrapping sway,—
Two travellers reposed upon a plain ;
The one who, sitting 'gainst a rocky rest
His mien clearly marked a man of brain,
And such indeed is this Professor Gates,
A man of much renown within the
States.
- But tall and straight the other stood, his
mind,
Unlike companion's, seemed confined
By thoughts more distant than the wild,
fair scene ;
20. And noble brow bespoke a cloud of care
That with the lines of wisdom struggled
there.
His eyes one moment wrapped in tender
light,
Then gleamed a dark, determined pur-
pose there ;
As beacon to the seeking ships at night
Is masked in shadow, then the light laid
bare,
As tender to the sailor as his sweet-
heart's eyes ;

Alternate darts destruction or a love.
The savant watched him with a curious
gaze,
Throws back sombrero with a careless
shove:

30. "Señor, our trip has failed; no finds as
yet."

The other with a quiet voice that would
unset
Our character gained from his haughty
mien:

"All, Medico, comes to the man who
waits

And works; this plain may yet unfold a
tomb.

As that mimosa holds its timid baits
From leilu looking for its food. A
doom

Ne'er follows man of own accord; 't is
like

The tamed bird that must be coaxed,
and man

Is ever ready to invite the strike

40. He sees ill-fate hold o'er him. The ban
Of severed love 's the only thievish woe
That creeps and crawls into the sleeping
heart

As yon an'condas on the antus go;

'T is like the Muras' curare-covered dart,
The 'whispered death' that lulls the
brain to sleep."

The other wondering watched the giant
snake

That swayed with solemn swing and deep
From lofty perch that boughs of wine-
palm made;

That bough that Agassiz, my loved
mentor, aptly said

50. Looked like "Long limbs of coral
flecked with green."

And while he watched, his mind with
mysteries fed,

He marvelled at his comrade's readless
mien.

This man had met him in Oaxaca's
street

And asked to join the party, ten savants,
In search for pottery from Peru. And
soon

Gates found in him a mighty mind.

As travelling will a friendship tightly
bind

The two were joined in study heart and
soul.

Leon Tamatquam, such he gave his
name,

60. As fondness, not merely fame, was
 striven-for goal,
 A most respected student soon became.
 But reticent in speech, o'er past a veil
 Was cast that every glance was to no
 avail.
 Such were the thoughts his comrade
 pondered o'er,
 And turned with careless eye his puzzled
 look
 Round scene whose barrenness could
 naught but bore.
 But sudden starts, for boulder which
 he 'd took
 For rest, in certain angles glowed with
 furrowed streaks
 Where sunlight rested golden arrows on.
70. The two men knelt beside this new-
 found freak,
 Unravell'd the Toltec picture-language
 drawn,
 With scarce a word to other said. This
 stone
 Of catacomb of unknown age the door,
 The closed clausura, undisturbèd throne
 Of rest for thousand cycles, maybe more,
 To them was greater wealth than mine
 of gold.

For full an hour they feast their learned
look

On fascinating tales the figures told.

Then toward the camp their way they
took

80. Conversing on the fortune accidentally
found.

A fortune dwelt within their pathway
too,

For wealth of natural beauty reigned
around,

A scene whose worldly rivals are but
few.

The rosewood wrapped with long lianed
wreaths

Where grew when startled by the noise
like leaves

The Agrippina moth in mimicry.

And as their path was sister to the
stream,

The branches held the *butivis* choir
whose tree

O'erlooked their tiny mud-made homes
that teem

90. Within the reeds that line the river's
shore.

Kingfishers starched with stateliness
with lore

Of Walton watched the game-fre-
quented tide.
And diving-grebes, loon of tropic clime,
At their approach beneath the surface
slide
With speed of arrow's flight. In ill-
kept time
The partridge drums his quick retreat;
on high
The rainbow-gowned macaws like
much-mooned ¹ maids
Scold at the unoffending men. The eye
Met all, but their appreciation fades
100. At thought of news they took to
comrades' camp.
Around the fire they sat and heard
with joy;
The blaze that served their needs as
stove and lamp
Lit up each interested face. But joy
Cannot allay a forest hunger though,
and sound
To supper gained a cheer. After that
they sat
And talked with vim o'er finding of the
mound,
Upon the soft luxurious mossy mat;

¹ Much-mooned—an Indian expression of great age.

- Despite the insects 'chanted by the
light,
'Mong which a scorpion like a lobster
small
110. Went crawling round their feet. Off
to the right
And leaning on a tree apart from all
There Leon stood. A deeper joy to
him,—
'T was fame, but was that all? Ah,
no, the loud,
Discordant cry of grebe was like a
hymn;
At last ill-fortune seemed to lift its
cloud,
That hope so long had fought in vain,
and peace
Was in his heart. Next day they oped
the grave,
And from its jealous aged hands release
The tokens of a former art (the cave
120. In modal and its wealth may now be
seen
In the largest museum of our land),
Their work complete, a fame secured,
and glean
Of wealth from thankful world they
knew at hand,

They start on home return. Float
down the stream
Where Nature satiates her wildest
dream,
And languid answers plea the fairies
sent,
Gives tacit leave to tawdry ornament.
The Amazon 's a rich-cut boudoir
bowl
And filled with silver fish or glistening
gold,
130. And round the room her neat, artistic
soul
Hath ranged the richest hangings earth
can hold.
But like the furred intruder in that
room,
Bespeaking for those gold-fish awful
doom,
Roam monsters like the myths of an-
cient Rome,
Surprising stones within a setting
such!
But one of her unsolved enigmas this,
For she surprises us in very much;
It only interest adds, 't is not amiss.
From off the bank and startled by their
boat

140. Cruel caymans crawl into the deep,
Or like Turumus' Trunk they stealthily
float
To challenge those who thus disturb
their sleep.
Beneath the crystal surface like a lens
Are seen the gliding water-snakes from
dens
Beneath the spreading roots of Exselsa
tree
That built its domicile too near the
tide;
Or poison-dart backed duridaris glide
Seduce a smile from stream near ripple-
free,
While chasing smaller pecos spitefully.

CANTO IV.

Once more we're led to Mitla's Mono-
lithic Hall,
Once more to that all-silent mystieried
wall,
That may have stood assaulting armies'
blows,
Or nobler thought protected priestly rite.
The sun three fourths its trip had made
and glows

With all its torturing, mantle-moving
might.

The ground is tessellated with the light
That mixes with the dark to form a floor
Marquetry-like,—more pretty than the
wall

10. Of that Mosaic Corridor so near.

The light in more detail than former call
Portrays this ruin, of past a mighty bier,
This unarched type of massive Norman
style,

Which calls more question than the
pyramids

Of Cholula and of Egypt too. A trial
This sun must have at night to close its
lids

When prying man comes peering round;
it saw

It built and, pleased by worship given to
him,

Made oath to keep it from the future's
maw;

20. And we on gazing thoughtfully share
this whim.

'T would half its interest lose if were
but known;

Cursed be that man, that relic-seeking
drone,

- He need not leave his first reluctant
track
To find a living curio. The sun,
As if to drive these curious travellers
back,
Threw stinging darts of heat that
seemed to run
Even the shadows through. In refuge
sought
In gloom a wide-girthed pillar made
'Gainst which the sun when he had use-
less fought
30. Laid there to sleep, and thus the spot
of shade,
Two women rest. The one was old and
gray,
Reclined in posture spoke her ill or
tired;
The other, young, was standing, loving,
near
And lending words of hope scarce self-
inspired.
But was not this the harvest-time of
year,
And would the feast not grace the town
at morn,
And now 't was almost night, would
Leon come?

- She bent to loose the old mantilla rich,
In Anahuac but worn by noble born,
40. That madre's strength alone could
scarce have done.
What was that shadow unseen by the
maid
That crept from the subterranean hall
From Inlaid Corridor! It trailed the
shade,
And like an anaconda shunning all
That spoke of being seen. And was it
not
A reptile bent upon their harm? No,
not
A natural snake, for looking close we
find
The same malignant brute that caused
this woe.
A cobra 'd be a closer friend than mind
50. They crossed in its brutish lust. Sure,
yet how slow,
He crawls from stone to stone until he's
placed
Himself between the women and the
door.
Another man in richest velvet laced,
Whose gold-insigniaed sombrero speaks
him a prince,

Came striding down the road. An upward glance

And Juana sees her Love. With open arm

She runs toward him, but sudden stops and clasps her hands

And shrieks in warning wild alarm!

McCreer had leaped behind Leon and stands

60. His sword upraised to strike; Leon leaped round,

As quick as lightning bared his blade, and found

The stroke upon its guard, then raised his steel;

But God had drawn His 'venging sword. Leon,

His sword yet pure, saw foe back wildly reel,

And staggering fall. The three looked on

In awe, but Leon's piercing glance was caught,

Excited points to right hand of the man; There was the proof,—not mortal had he fought,

But God through Nature had amended plan

70. And punished here in lieu of Judgment
Day.

And as they looked a tarantula leapt
From off the swollen corpse and ran
away.

The fiend who on the ground before
them slept

But slightly showed the effects of poi-
son's power,

So like his natural countenance that
hour

Of drink had Circe-like changed form.

In awe

The friends now fled the most revolting
sight ;

The sun in sorrow hastened to withdraw
And hide her lovèd Mitla from the
light ;

80. So glad that justice had been meted out
But sorrowed that her fane should be
the court.

When near the town they saw as if in
doubt

A man advancing slow ; he nearer came ;
'T was Leon's father ; then the two stood
still

And waited each to speak, but love
o'ercame

And though against the dictates of his
will,
The father embraced his son and burst
in tears.
Now was an end to all his haunting
fears,
A chance to make amends for suffering
caused,
90. He loosed his son, the proud old man
ne'er paused,
Saluted Juana as a daughter dear,
Her mother with respect,—and all was
right.
Perhaps illiterate surmise and fear
I have been wont to cast before your
sight,
But I believe in some our neighboring
spheres
There may or will have been more
James McCreers.



SEASONS



LAY TO THE WEST WIND

MIGHTY muse of lyric lays attend,
Meditate with me awhile, and bend
Your thoughtful head o'er your listening lyre
And sing to it songs divine. Inspire
And appoint me earthly sire for thee
Signed by accolade of fame. Make me
To rightly give rank to wind we love
All other summer zephyrs above.
Our nation's best admirer, too,
He knows each dell and each mountain view,
For with Nature his wife he roams across
Between the brother seas, when they breathe
To her songs that bring the beauty blush.
He does not come with a mighty rush,
But soft as a tinkling lyric lay,
For the scenes he meets upon the way
In our lovely land's unpeered array
Bid the west wind his advancing stay,
And he gains their character so sweet
As we when often the good we meet.
Through the elms, whose trembling, nerv-
ous keys

48 Lay to the West Wind

Are cedillas softening sounds of breeze,
Over grassy lawns and laurelled leas,
Through the fields of corn, pretended seas,
Comes in beats the love-tune-laden wind.
Each a lost chord ne'er to be defined,
Each a harmony sweet and refined,
As of dryad's virtued voice in trees confined.

Through the fragrant heaps of new-mown
 hay,
From the smellful spots where lilacs lay,
With the clover cologne of summer day,
And the perfumed breath of dearest May,
Comes the west wind laden with odors
 sweet.

With its gentle gasps it bears the bleat
Of the sheep upon the sloping mead,
Of their stingless gossip as they feed,
Or stretched beneath a leafy shade,
Contented, calm like a Quaker maid;
Or the distant mooing of the cows,
The bugles that blow at set of sun,
And from its place in the topmost boughs
The cow-bunting sounds his gurgling fun.
Ah, sweet is thy power, O tyrant breeze!
We will willingly take Hume's Histories
That herald absolute control,
If thou wilt usurp the horizon's gates.

Lay to the West Wind 49

For thou art the kernel and the soul
Of creation's ripening force. Mandates
From thee are the "Sesame " that gives
Entrée to all that blossoms and lives.

4

A RESTLESS SUMMER EVENING

LIKE monster moths the wind-mills wave
Their white wings in the breeze,
Their two long black antennæ lave
In brooklet's shallow seas.

Their ghostly guard they watchful keep
And spring their rattle clear,
O'er ev'ry rumor wind blown near
Of comrades not asleep.

The drum-beat of the hyla joins
The cricket on the lea,
That stretching down almost purloins
The spot where the bank should be.

And answering water-beetles seek
The moonlight on the creek,
To dress their raven mail to fight
Their foe, the town street-light.

Array themselves, platoon and flank,
And steadily ascend the bank,
To hyla's drum and cricket's fife,
All eager and all life.

A Restless Summer Evening 51

And then the restless courtier breeze
Comes whistling through the trees;
Teaching each leaf the pibroch trill
Piped by the whip-poor-will.

O, nervous eve of summer-time,
So restless, full of life,
How our souls respond and climb
To tingling, vague, sweet strife!

WINTER

'T IS winter. Through the leafless trees
Sing not the birds; nor in the ground
Chirp not the insects, hum not the bees;
Naught but the cold wind's mournful
sound.

The face of Nature seems to borrow
The stoic silence of one in sorrow;
No smile our chastened natures meet
When eager bend we at her feet.

Hither and thither all is still,
Hushed is each busy, bubbling brook,
Stopped is each tiny tinkling rill,
Sealed all with pearl, a sacred nook.

Divers are the pictures Nature brings,
But whether the snow flies or spring bird
sings
Blest beauty is present, and here e'er to stay,
No matter how balmy or chill be the day.

THE BREAKING OF THE BUDS

THE month whose nature gives it name
Hath laughing, smiling come.
And Nature wakes in sweet acclaim,
That was so sad and dumb.

And voices, though not skilled in tune,
Sound to our waiting ear
As sweetly as the best in June,
'T is absence makes them dear.

The plaintive pewee builds her nest
'Neath bridge that spans the brook;
In times of danger and unrest
It seems a peaceful nook.

And robin to the opening year
Is calling "Quick!" in fear
Lest we should lie asleep too long
And shirk the opening song.

All bring good gifts to noble-born,
For April's born to-day;

54 The Breaking of the Buds

The month when drear rains cloud the
 morn,—

At noon the sunbeams play.

'T is then the brown buds burst their bonds,
 Reveal the wax-like leaves;
The tiny, stretching, bashful fronds
 That tremble forth like thieves.

Encouraged by the suckling sun
 And accommodating rain,
As though in virtued soil ant-dune
 Whose powers fakirs feign:

They fructify with magic might,
A nation in a night;
And like the swift chameleon change
The brown for green estrange.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE

WHEN winter's cold and dismal blast
Comes calling bush and leaf to rest,
To tell the birds their song is past,
And helps the frost till Nature's dressed
In mourning for the summer dead,
Then blooms a tree so full and free,
The Christmas Tree.

In foreign lands grows the bread-fruit tree,
And trees that dishes grow, and queerer still,
Right here at home we egg-plants see.
But here indeed grow children's toys,
The dolls and drums for girls and boys.
Why can't it e'er in blossom be,
This Christmas Tree ?

Each year discovered all anew
By white-robed pigmies, dearest folk ;
Each mindful of the rest, and brew
No storms as older people do
When they discover something new.
If only grown-folks could unearth
Some Christmas Trees !

A Christmas tree to turn our thought
To share our brother's joy and rue,
As oft we watch the children do.
The fond solicitude for some one else
Which all resolvèd hatred melts,
The childish joy at others' gain
 Around the Christmas Tree.

PROPHECIES OF SPRING

SOON Nature from the pupal state will
wake,

Bud blithely the blest empurpled wings
Of spring and summerward its flight will
make,

Imago-like from bright to brighter things.
And birdlings their unfictile song will sing,
Tiny but touching tones of joy they ring,
Echoed as on the green-gowned flowerlet
The butterflies sweet-sipping sit,
Content in silence their short stay to live.
E'en the lakes and rivulets run restive
From out their prisoning white winter's
snail-shell

And leap joyfully down the awakened dell.
And Nature awakened without, within,
Will praise the Creator, still or with song,
With voices all varied though theme is akin.

MY FLOCKS

A SUMMER LAMENT

MY flocks have wandered far,
No more they line the bar,
My shepherd is asleep,
Far flown his precious keep,
Alone their fallacy I weep
As baby o'er her cloud-choked star,
O'er those who 've wandered far.

The West wind wafts perfume,
But my dear flocks are fled.
The East wind was my Crook,
Why was his work forsook ?
He fought the North wind, wolf of fear,
In stormy fight both met their doom,
The marbled pole 's their tomb.

The West wind wafts perfume,
It 's but the ghost of dead,
The North wind and the East,

It cannot find my flocks who 've fled,
The trail they left is of the least,
And I must sit in gloom,—
My fruitless watch assume.

The West wind wafts perfume;
What are my flocks you say?
The gulls and hawks are they
That on a Northeast winter day
They line the bar within the bay;
Their pasture is the spume
Unripened by West's perfume.

FROST

WHEN the summer-time is done,
When the winter 's just begun,
For an artist from the skies,
To remove the summer dyes
Apropos for winter's eyes,
Nature sends.

You may see him tint the flowers
And the leaf that shrinks and cowers
In deep dyes of gold and red ;
And the tiny nested nuts
Rudely broken from their bed
By his hand.

On the windows works his art,
As he etches mimic hills,
Boundless woods or single trees.
Broad lagoons that run to rills ;
Many scenes the Frost can freeze
With his brush.

With an imitation snow,
Deftly draws a garden white,
Turning back the sun-sent light

With an opal's rainbow hue,
 Covering o'er the weaker dew
 On the ground.

Thus the fairy artist Frost
 Works his will, near winter-time.
 'T is the winter's first attempt
 Making snow. A signal chime
 Tells the world its harvests reap,
 Then to sleep.

'T IS TIME THE THRUSH TRAVELS
HOME

'T WAS only yesterday I heard the thrush,
In conversation with its mate,
So soft but all distinct in morning hush;—
“For thrushes here the time grows late,

“And now where shall we go, sweet darling
mine,
To Southern lands of palm and pine?
Or West to Angeles' flowery fields,
That for our nest sweet rose-leaves yields ?

“Or to the Aztec's mystery-weaving walls,
And build our nest in rocky cleft?
For from the trees the leaf already falls,
And soon no nesting will be left.”

And then I watched them fly to far-off South,
The land the sunshine ne'er forgets.
I hear the farewell song from out his mouth,
Till softer, softer still, it gets.

So sweet but sad the song now says,—

“Farewell,

Wee-o, wee-o, tit-ti, wee-o.”

Who love the birds these tones a blessing tell,

’Cept when they sound as now,—“We
go.”

Our gray-cheeked friends have fellow-trav-
ellers,

For summer soon will yield her sway,

And weary winter weather no song lures;

We soon will toil through tuneless day.

THE GRASSHOPPERS

A CROSS the tessellated spring-time fields,
Whose furrows ordered interlace,
The fields that grudging the country road-
way yields,
That runs like a brook through grassy
place,
These insects happy leap from square to
square,
As though a game of draughts was there.

And wearied with their short-winged flight,
they dive

In the road, then rise all wet with dust,
E'er trying to show how much they are alive.

Then 'neath a leaf their head they thrust,
As if ashamed of their dust-bedraggled suit,
Whose sombre hue 's e'en more acute.

This dull brown garb is changed while on the
wing

For clothes of velvet, black and white,
Like Norman monks' gowns but a covering

For satin cloak with ermine white.
And, too, when watched they sit like judges
gray ;

Be unconcerned and see their play.

So many leaping all around, it 's strange,
While their positions quickly change,
That their mosaic-vision 's always true
And ne'er confuses any view.

But any one possessing checkered eyes
At jumping should capture the prize.

THE FIREFLY

WHEN the gales of the daytime have all
 passed away,
That the touch of the twilight has kind
 smoothed away,
Comes the firefly, St. Elmo's Fire of the
 wood,
Prophesying from storm a repose calm and
 good.

Scattered sparks from the smithy the wood-
 land employs
To fashion a covering of sable mail,
To envelop the forest in proof against noise
And the laboring mood that in daytime
 prevail.

Tiny torches the blossoms are bearing along,
As they come in the night to the buds they
 belong,
To surprise you and me. Here and thither
 they fly
In the search for the stem that they should
 occupy.

We can be little fireflies in earth's sin-dark
night,
Tiny sparks from the forge of the Maker of
light.
Lighting flowers to buds that some chance
seed has sown,
To a life fit for worker and not for a drone.

THE BROKEN BOUGH'S LAMENT

AN INDIAN SONG OF JEALOUSY

Broken Bough, a chief of the Delawares ; Hawta, his
faithless wife ; Morfa, his enemy ; Ossier, his son.

THE THREAT

YOU stole from me who loved her,
With soft words gained her glance ;
Your piercing words have charmed her,
But sharper still 's my lance !
You wooed her from my wigwam,
And bade my heart be calm,
That, swelling like the torrent
With floods that clouds have sent,
But waiteth for the moment
To break with wild intent.
Or mighty wind of Heaven,
Disdaining looks on men,
With power to wreak its vengeance,
But, waiting, hate contents.

The storm that 's lashed for hours
 With sullen, angry hate,
 Is calling in its powers
 To wield a mightier fate.
 Beware my vengeance, Morfa,
 Thy trail shall e'er be mine,
 And like the dreaded cobra,
 Who mate's loss doth repine,
 I 'll follow thee at hunting,
 And like a hawk watch thee!
 Till, when your triumph 's ringing,
 And honored is your tepee,
 Like an avenging panther
 Then in your tent I 'll spring,
 And Hawta then I 'll woo her,
 My old love-songs I 'll sing,
 And, smiling, thee will defy
 To brook the lion's wrath;
 And see then 'fore Hawta's eye
 Who 'll tread the *lonesome path*.
 For thou hast stolen from me
 The rosebud of my life,
 The morning dawn in beauty,
 The sweetest song her life.
 You stole from me who loved her,
 With soft words gained her glance,
 Your piercing words have charmed her,
 But sharper still 's my lance.

70 Broken Bough's Lament

LAMENT

O, Hawta, fairest lily
That Manitou hath made,
And thou who deigned to love me,
To bright the gloomy shade!
My wigwam was without a flower,
As like an ugly stone
From resting-place is thrown
And then a handsome flower
Is sown where all was dark.
Oh, wilt thou, choice relenting,
Roll back the crushing stone?
And there my flower choking,
My happiness o'erthrown.
My life is like the roses
When sun hath hid its grace,
And fading now reposes
All crushed 'neath sorrow's pace.
Oh, wood-dove of the forest,
My love, Majella, hear;
I, first in every conquest,
Who scorn both death and fear,
Am mourning like a woman,
With wisdom of a child.
Myself my fiercest foeman
From bootless thoughts and wild!
Come back, oh, come back to me,

Broken Bough's Lament 71

I 'll willing all forgive,
If thou art now unhappy,
All happiness I 'll give.
Why couldst thou not be happy,
Contented, when with me;
I loved thee, served thee truly,
Respectfully, tenderly.
No burdens didst thou bear me,
They were for harsher ones;
I bade thee be contented,
And tell me what to do
To make your life rose-scented,
That was your hardest rue.
I sit beside my tepee
(The bravest in the town
But gone now is its beauty,
As storm-clouds sun-days drown)
And watch our little Ossier
Go running up and down,
Or stealthily like the panther
The butterflies surprise
With cunning of his father;
But, caught, he loosed his prize,
With love gained from his mother.
How canst thou leave our darling,
Who needs a mother's care?
Come back, oh, come back to me,
Thou sweetest and most fair!

72 Broken Bough's Lament

Oh, wilt thou, past forgetting
How I have worshipped thee,
Blight lives so unrelenting,
Of lovèd son and me ?
Farewell, then, dearest sweetheart,
Farewell, ye forests old,
Farewell to scenes that were so sweet,
Now like a story told
Of happy freedom once possessed
To captive foe harassed.

MY VALENTINE

AH, Cupid, bring me back my valentine
And sow it round with eglantine,
Where as I sent forget-me-nots there grew.
You charmed her not, you bade me woo!
Forget-me-not? Ah, yes, for lack of care
Those flowers have wilted, faded where
A moment hence in joy and promise placed,
Were watched and nursed in nervous haste.

And with that valentine I sent my heart,
Transfixed with your now painful dart,
That in the suddenness of ecstasy
Made numb, the wound was feeling-free.
You say this grief will last as did the joy?
For years did I my pride employ
To wrap the rue in insult without grief,
The hidden thorn still mars the leaf.

Go, bring my broken heart, o'er it I 'll weep,
The truant card I 'll carefully keep,
And mourn in silence at the lonely grave
It marks,—for love that life me gave

Hast also taken life. Perhaps some day—
Who knows? her wandering feet may find
That grave; I 'll keep fresh-flowered and
 waiting stay,
Our forget-me-nots may grow entwined.

THE LABORER'S SONG

DEAR Lord, I pray Thee not to make
Me an immune to toil.
The lives of leisure that forsake
The working of the soil
Are spent in weeding thorny roots,
With trouble as their fruits.

But harden hands that hold the plow
To dress life's stony field,
To fling the furrow straight allow,
To rock and root ne'er yield.
The hardness of a work depends
On strength that courage lends.

E'en if the trouble-ridgèd glebe
With sorrow's frost is white,
Deep down, safe-hidden from the sight
And contaminating blight,
Lies the green and growing seed,
From darkest days lies freed:—

The seed that 's sown by Thy great love
Pregnant with prophecy
Of rest and life with Thee above.

The surface sorrow frost
Warmed and melted is the source
Of strong, fructifying force.

Dear Lord, I pray Thee not to make
Me an immune to toil.
"Wreaths gained of vanity shall forsake,
But those of labored toil
Shall e'er increase," so make me strong.
Thus ran the laborer's song.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

THE bells announce the old year speeds,
But by self-queries nearly drowned,—
Count not thy years by days but deeds,
Call not complete lest victory crowned.

When on that day my years unrolled
I glance along what they unfold,
Shall this which trembling waits to fall
Stand o'er the rest more bright and tall?

As miser shines his last-earned coin
And lays so tender by the rest,
Which even want cannot purloin,
Is my last year the brightest, best?

If not, e'en want cannot recall.
As bad associates e'er seduce,
Will passing year pollute them all?
I trust 't will brighter power produce.

Dear God, to whom for help we bow,
Give strength to keep the well-meant vow;
Give new-born year the best of earth,
As wise men at the Savior's birth.

A DULL DAY

I 'M sad to-day. The west winds waft the
fogs away
That lingered o'er the bay.
The drizzling damp so drear starts now to
disappear,
But melancholy 's here.

My sleeping soul is prone to think the
wind,
With feeling far from kind,
Hath taken from round but left the mist on
future planned.
Ambition 's lost demand.

The butterflies and bees so bright my life
did light,
They sleep, they think 't is night;
And sun sick with the sinning world in
mourning stays
To hide in clouds its rays.

In grief I turn for robin's cheer or catbird's
call,

But sorrow stills them all.

The trees are hung with tears like crystals
from a cave,

The mourning mist these gave.

But contrast clings in scenes like this. The
sun more bright

Will seem to our waiting sight

When once again it shines. The songs from
silence steep

Will seem more sweet and deep.

A SUMMER SHOWER

SEE the tiny spheres of rain
As in merry play they run
Down the pane.
As the storm has just begun,
They have time to while away
In sweet play.

By and by their speed 's so swift,
Down the glass they drift
Like a brook.
And the drops all fade away,
In their work no time for play.
As we look

Through the screen of pearly beads,
Of the trees and flowers one reads
In clear song.
When the rain new life it brings
From their gala gowns joy rings
All day long.

And the rivulets repeat
To the bending, listening wheat
 Joyful thanks.
'Gainst the scorching sun's long siege
Reinforced once more they flow
 O'er their banks.

For the rain we thank thee, Lord,
'T is a blessing we can ill afford
 E'er to lose.
Though it mars our plans and plays,
It 's a joy in other ways,
 That we choose.

A PRISONER

A PRISONER I, what though through
golden bars
I see the sun and scan the stars
'T is yet not freedom's air I daily drink,
Sometimes my memory 's wrong, I think.

My former life seems such unsullied bliss,
As like a dream when viewed from this.
Long since I came from sunny southern
Spain
Where naught but happiness had reign.

One day they caught and bound and blinded
me,
A long, long time I could not see;
And when at last unbound I looked around
In a prison's gloom myself I found.

Alas! the same as tiny plant peeped through
With timid strength coaxed by the dew,
Instead of sunny scene she 'd heard it told
Found snow-numbed Nature bleak and cold.

No more through green-gowned groves of
trees I fly,
Through air of song that ne'er did die,
And sunbeams gilding all with warmth of
love
Awakening praise below, above.

My friends the birds in hymns with insects
vied,
We sang all day and never sighed;
Our hearts were light and more our limbs
were free
To seek society.

And now I see the sun but flecked across
With blackened bars of freedom's loss.
God made us birds to fly and fill the air with
song;
To catch and cage the weak 't is wrong.

A BUTTERFLY

SWEET symbol of God's tender grace,
White wanderer who dread death dis-
dains,
Breathe the secret of thy filmy race
Immured from doubtings, griefs, and
pains.
Teach us from Nature's heavenly art
Of sweet submission from an humble heart.

While wrapped in wooded crypt do you
Leave useless body here at rest,
To flit in joy in loving view
Of the dear Master? Then art blessed
And back to weary earth come down
Part dressed with wings in Heaven's gown?

Is it true that you too possess,
In common with your neighbor, Man,
The aches and soul-straining sadness
Of past deeds done with present's ban?
But better knowing God's demands
Your sorrows leave at His commands?

A far sublimer thought is this:

Thou knowest naught of sorrow's sting,
Naught but blithe Nature's loving kiss,

And doing e'er the godly thing,
For, knowing but the simple good,
No evil by you understood.



SCATTERED PETALS



THE SPEECHLESS SERMON

- I**N striking bold relief displayed
By rising sun's soft, soothing gray
conveyed,
This ancient home of chivalry
Stands told, a tale of past glory.
Methinks e'en now the knights with
squires,
And armed as though the time requires,
Are passing in through blazoned gate,
With bugle call and shows of state.
But this is all of long ago ;
10. Only as bits of sound are heard and lost
When winds waft to then from us
blow,
Thus more impress the silence's cost.
So visions bright soon disappear,
To leave this place it seems more drear.
Time's seal is placed on portal-post
And ivy-cloaked the walls seem part
Of Nature's work, once proud man's
boast.

90 The Speechless Sermon

- Which stands the higher in point of art?
And e'en the courtyard, stage of scene,
20. Which history tells and we but dream,
Now paved in rough marquetry work,
And green peeps round each crumbling
 block,
And bees and beetles countless lurk
Where noble hounds were wont to flock.
So now the rising sun portrayed
This haven of Welch from Norman raid.
Inside, the centuries' marking hands
Have left no velvet hung on walls
That once were splendid archèd halls,
30. Where banquet song and toast were
 given,
And stand was made for land so striven.
And as in years long since gone by
This castle rang with numbers high
Of many a noble and brave knight,
So quick for home to arm and fight,
Ah, now but one this place calls
 "home,"
A poor and lonely man, whose dome
Of life is but to work at will
On garden plot in part of court,
40. The tiny flower field to till.
He lived in sweet simplicity,
Alas! 't was not so sweet as seems,

The Speechless Sermon 91

For though with deep intensity
He loved the woods, the brooks, the
streams,

He knew not Him who made all these,
Who gave the song to birds and bees.
Tried he to learn to love the Lord,
Till marks of pain wrote on his brow
And heart had sorrow stored.

50. 'T is far the hardest cross to bear,—
When one in search of Heavenly grace,
As earthly pains at heart they tear,
But knowing not where Savior's face
Is turned cannot to Him run home,
And take the blessed comfort there
When too tired and faint more to
roam.

- Year in, year out, he grieved and prayed,
And fitting penitence was made,
But still no rest was sent to him,
60. Till last it came when hope was dim.
By some small, simple errand led
To donjon dark on left of keep,
The only place by sun not reached,
Where dark unwoke had lain asleep
Through a night of many varied scenes,
And heard nor seen what passed with-
out,
As different masters by various means

92 The Speechless Sermon

Acquired the fort ; but all held out
That this grim tower was their best
power

70. A stubborn heart to break and part.
So as the man went in this day
A tinge of sadness touched his soul.
He thought of prisoners passed away
Their lives with suffering in this hole.
And he, not far removed from them,
Was prisoner of a sterner foe,
For consciences when held by them
Are strict and unappeased bring woe.
And, too, his dungeon was so dark
80. Where ne'er a ray of light shone in,
And his heart with awe and sadness
throbbed.
- But what is that on the floor in front !
Is 't beast or bird of freedom robbed,
Or victim of some ghostly hunt?
With wonder, fear, and reverence
He picks the object from its bed,
Where by its dust-draped appearance
Long time had lain in chamber dread.
With what a feeling then he looks
90. On one of that Christianity's books
That he in vain so long had sought !
What memories, too, this Bible brought
Of one who taught him at her knee

The Speechless Sermon 93

When heart was light and conscience
free!

A burning tear stole down his cheek.
He asked not how it happened there,
Nor wished for further things to seek,
He knew that silent, dusty Book
Was leading link to peace and rest.

100. And kneeling there, the Book he took;
These cheering words his eyes arrest:—
“How say ye to my soul,
Flee as a bird to your mountain?”
So the birds that he saw and studied
In God reposed their every trust,
And God giving strength they hurried
To the rest of the Maker’s love.
So love of Nature joined to thought
Of passage read conversion brought.

110. And God from seat of power above
Stretched down a hand, assistance gave.
And tired, sick soul on wings of grace
Then fled to Him who soon forgave.
Rest, peace, and joy flood o’er his face,
He’s happy now as busy bird turned
home

Leaves trials that infest his roam
And wisps to mate and young the tale
How Christ takes care of tired and frail.
Just list ye here who suffering read,—

94 The Speechless Sermon

120. Ye delve too deep for rest indeed ;
Just catch the song that insects sing,
And hear the birds bear too the
 melody.

All through the works of Nature ring
The songs of sweet simplicity
That tell :—All ye who 're sick and sad,
Flee home to Christ, He 'll make you
 glad.

MUSIC

AS on a quiet sleeping woodland stream
A weeping-willow leaf in falling wakes
The resting ripples ranged in tiny troughs
Of space, which gliding 'cross lingering lisp
To the farther shore; so music on the ear
Takes sweet consolation to sorrowing souls,
Souls that sleeping, o'ercome with deep de-
pression,
Are rippled into a sense of the being.
As from side to side slipped the water-waves,
So one directed note of magic music delves
Into the darkest dungeons of our hearts,
Brings forth the long-hid brightness buried
there
By some past secret sorrow that unbidden
Stays still, our visions of the future mars,
Our thoughts of past to tinge in bitter
shade.
All ages knew thy power on mortal emotions,
All epochs thy power to soothe or waken
The fierce feelings of war or prayers of peace.

Thy voice in various tones to earth comes
down
With softened syllables from ill-wrought
pipes
Beguiled in Paradise's Park the four,
'Cept one from whom all nations take their
birth;
Or ringing round the wayward walls kept
time,
As seven-circled Jericho was taken.
'T is made or listened to by all earth's life
'Cept one or two mainly Canidæ tribe,
Whose ears of more acute sensitiveness
Catch waves which, quickly moving, us
escape.
They hear the faintest incongruities
Which striking pierce their feeling ears with
pain.
When ponder we on immortality
And on that life existing after death,
The music plays a most important part.
And ever when we wish to write or speak
Of aught that 's sweet and soft and lulls our
souls
We call it song, that word itself says
"sleep."

THE DEVON COAST

THROUGH the mists of the sheltering
 sea-fogs
A vision of beauty we see,
As ploughing through spray that sight clogs
The land lies to view on our lee.

After months of surging storm on the ocean
We at rest in the harbor lie,
With scarce a wave-move or a motion,
Though wind and the fog are yet nigh.

But when through the dismal dawn of the
 morn
The shining sun in splendor breaks,
Then the fading fog from its place is torn,
The wind his departure he takes.

And then to our eyes without aught to stop
A heavenly picture appears,
As though us from work to drop
Neptune this paradise rears.

From the water's wave to the steep hill's
crest

Are green-clothed farms and tiny towns
In the springtime's blest freshened beauty,
rest,

Framed round with purpled cliffs and
downs.

And grazing quietly on the sloping fields,
The countless clouds of cattle climb,
And softly stirring with light lowing yields
The west wind their joy-ringing rhyme.

THE SAILOR'S STORY

FIRST let me tell about the house wherein
I stopped
When this true tale was told to me. With
tall trees topped
And girdled round with gooseberry vines, a
view so bright
The scene 's in memory still and years scarce
dim the sight.
Well-built of rough-hewn blocks of stone,
the ivy green
Clings close as curtains grand on a stage help
out the scene.
Within, the spacious dining-room was tyrant
here
And all the other rooms withdrew up-stairs
in fear.
Across one end that grandest piece of house-
hold art
The family fireplace stood, warmed body,
thought, and heart.
But still the room was cold and drear one
man without,

Our landlord happy, gay, and wise; he,
though quite stout,
No one so quick for other's needs or kindness show.
Many men came here and many I learned to know,
Diversified in bearing, means, and depth.
But one
My interest gained, and, too, his confidence
I won.
From youth he 'd sailed the known and unknown seas.
And touching tales he told of scenes so strange, though true,
Of cannibals and gentler tribes. Of coral keys,
Of trees that formed a fane adorned in brightest hue.
But my mind was touched when, drawn by
I know not what,
In gentler tones he told of those 'mong whom his lot
Some time had cast, the Indians Caribbee,
so near
My own dear country, too. And legends he 'd learned here
When sung my heart went to these simple men whom he

The Sailor's Story

101

Was wont to "Nature's Nation" name, and
well bestowed.
But memory 's e'er a fickle friend and brings
to me
But one sad song of these, I 'll tell if you
please.
It oft returns to me with thoughts of those
I 've known,
The long, sweet hours we sat and talked of
strange sailed-seas.
Perhaps a friend as he 's seen me sit by
hours alone
Has thought it strange, that saddened smile
at naught he sees.
That old Welch Inn, I see it still, and years
scarce dim the sight,
But lingers on. Perhaps once more I 'll
wander there
And greet my friend. Sometimes I wish
I 'd sailed with him;
Would mournful memory mock as now it
does my mind?
I could not change this persecuted people's
woe,
My mind might more revolt at that which
there I 'd find.

THE TALE OF TAWAH

A CHIEF in silence stood one day
Where Tobasco's tide flows in the bay ;
His grave but gentle face was lined
With deep-drawn marks of thought that told
Of more than common cultured mind ;
And eyes both tender, bright, and bold.
These eyes were turned toward open seas,
And trouble, sorrow, shone in these.

Behind him smoke in snaky strings
Slow trickled to the sky. Sometimes
From happy souls sweet laughter rings ;
His sigh that 'scapes scarce rhymes.
He hears his wife, Suava, sing
To lull in sleep their babe so dear,
That bears his father's name, Tawah.
The chief's head sank to hide a tear.

The watch had called his chief to view
A fast approaching sail. In view
Of tales he 'd heard of Spanish deeds,

The chief with anxious thought now reads
Of danger dread his tribe impends.
Unskilled in war, in simple trust
They live, no controversy rends,
All thoughts of war away they 'd thrust.

He hears some steps that sweet resound
In well-known notes upon the ground.
"My lord, the sun prepares for sleep;
What sees Tawah that should him keep
Away from lodge where braves are met
And smoke their pipes of peace and set
The toils that each must do next morn
When shining Sun-god 's once more born?"

He tells her not what most he fears,
But arm in arm they homeward turn.
With whispered songs that strike our ears
When sung in simple tongue like theirs,
As murmuring meadow brooks that run
With tinkling tread o'er mounds of moss,
Though years bridged wedded life across,
Their courtship seemed as just begun.

They passed through groups in joyful play,
And older ones with straw so gay
Were weaving baskets bright. The men
From hunting just returned all sat

And smoked in silence deep, for when
An Indian council meets they make
No speech till something they have to say;
That 's not quite like our council's way.

The drum was beat, the men repaired
To council-lodge, where ill-prepared
The sober news the chief made known.
And now these men of peaceful mind
Were changed and darkening looks were
 thrown

Toward intruding foe. The man most kind,
When aught against his loved one turns,
Is made a fury's fire that burns.

The gentler ones that night reposed
In sleep that simple safety gave.
But many heads no sleep proposed;
Their souls a safer state did crave.
At morn the Spanish sailors land,
Indulged their roughened sport all round,
Received in patience by the band
Till act that lost their minds' command.

Tawah with tiny shaft and bow
Was toddling round and shooting bees,
His father fond his skill to show,
And try the Spanish chief to please.

A sullen Spanish rogue, a don,
Seized shaft and bow in fiendish fun,
And struck the babe a blow when he
To ask for captured toy made free.

The chief a moment stood struck dumb;
Rose 'mong the braves an angry hum.
Tawah the peace-man changed; his face
Grew drawn and set, his muscled arm
Appeared like oak entwined with vines.
The don stepped back in mute alarm,
But quicker still Tawah sprang forth
As lightning leaps from startled north.

He seized the don with arms that time
Of constant toil in hardening clime
Had forged to consistency of steel
And hurled him o'er the river bank.
A time they stood and knew not how to feel.
A quick command from one in rank,
The fight began. 'T was one to four,
But the natives fought as ne'er before,

But give not a shout or sound;
They tread the ground with wingèd bound,
They seem the space with men to fill,
But then they die as well as kill.

The chief in conflict closed with two,
When through he saw an awful view,—
His men all killed, his town on fire,
With naught but dead to greet their sire.

Ah, worse than all in wild dismay,
He found by careful, close survey
The feebler ones had captured been,
When foe the braves all dead had seen!
The brave old chief, o'ercome with grief,
In vain by calls Suava sought;
That she was gone he 'd scarce believe,
For grief e'er slow by mind is caught.

Tawah now followed far and fast
Along the coast where the Spaniards sailed;
But on the camps some days had passed
When he arrived. His heart ne'er failed,
His heart but Suava sung, his eyes
But Suava sought, on every rise
Of ground his sight in eager light
For signs of loved led in unwilling flight.

And tired in everything but love
And hate, two mightiest forces they;
Under the eagle or the dove
Do all men stand, to save or slay.

And here a mutual goal in view
When body lost revenge but grew.
God gives His help and strength to fight
To suffering ones who 're in the right.

Till last one night the camp he sees;
From camp the light shines through the
trees,
Outlines all objects round the tents,
And through the natural forest-rents
He saw the figures of the men,
And thought he saw a darker skin.
Tawah his son was either slain
Or by adoption saved, this thought gave
pain.

Then of a sudden came a shout,
Some one in scouting from camp gone out
Had seen Tawah! Quickly he gained
Suava's side, where blows he rained
On ever growing foe. Then came
Command to "Fire," a burst of flame,
A cloud of smoke, the deed was done.
Too many such victories were won!

AN INDIAN SAGA OF THE MOUND- BUILDERS

A T council's fires from learned sires
As old as yonder oak,
In school of age well titled sage,
I heard of whom you spoke.

From cold northwest 'fore earth was blest
With beasts or flowers or trees,
From dark confines where he ne'er shines,
Came the Sun-god's enemies.

And Manitou turned dew to snow
To entice the strangers on.
Thus made the cold clime called winter-time
The night without a dawn.

Deceived by same, they onward came
To Delaware's domains.
The sun then shone from golden throne,
The snow gave place to rains.

This sudden change to them so strange
 Brought suffering and dismay.
They shelter made within the shade
 Of cliffs without delay.

There temples reared rough-hewn and tiered
 With highest cultured art,
For Mars their god with science shod
 To advancement gave the start.

Of mighty Sun Mars was a son,
 They parted at his birth,
And now opposed by fates proposed
 For people on the earth.

But father's right combined with might
 O'ercame the truant son.
Despite their cry were doomed to die
 These people of the cliff and dune.

The strangers sought and wearily wrought
 To gain their god's relief.
The altared mounds so often found
 Were part of their belief.

The snake-shaped wreath within whose teeth
 The Eden apple lies,
By sign of sin self-conscious in
 Was soul-felt sacrifice.

To no avail their plea and wail,
They vanished one by one.
This was the tale the Indian told
Who worshipped god the Sun.

Some rumors claim these strangers came
From Asia's sun-warmed clime;
'T is prejudice that moveth us
In translating every rhyme.

Perhaps 't was wrong and but a song
Of mistradition made,
But rocks remain and publish plain
Accounts that do not fade:

Those pious piles uncrossed by smiles
To answer History's glance,
A monastery of chastity
Against impure advance.

The bones that bear with jealous care
With ice-bound mastodon
Pictures of past. Ah, hold them fast
And pure, sage skeleton!

Naught moves our minds nor interest finds
As mark of mystery.
Grown dumb with age, like Thracian sage,
Still think, though silently.

My soul take heed, from sin-stains freed,
With quiet dignity
Oppose the coarse and worldly force,
And quiet, stately be.

May sin be lost as morning frost
Beneath a passer's feet,
As thoughtfully I go passing by
Through life's short, winding street.

As time hath swept and no type kept
'Neath slow, deliberate pace,
The life and lore that are no more,
Leave silent, restful peace.

Depose the noise that mars thy poise,
The troubled tide so strong.
Life simple, sweet, is far more meet
As well as doubly strong.

ALIENI TEMPORIS FLORES

(FLOWERS OF PAST TIME)

ARGUMENT

THE sweet soothsayers that breathe out
 legendary lore,
Those legends whose untruth but makes
 them loved the more,
Cannot in volume all complete count history
Of meanings given their names. Still may
 not we be free
To reason and in our ensimpled manner
 guess
The parentage of superstitious songs? The
 stress
That Nature's charms lay on our lives has
 right to weave
The quaint traditions which our minds in
 part believe,
For things e'er look to us more than their
 visioned form.

'T is ne'er degrading or unseemly to transform

The scenes we see to tales that entertain the best

Not others but ourselves. And then those meanings part in jest

When held 'fore memory's lamp e'er bright reveal a stamp

More tragic than of mirth. As on glasses we must wear

To aid our enfeebled eyes, although we feel they 're there

Unusual motes are best perceived by holding to a light.

How oft we meet a word from another's lexicon

Of life that so resembles ours we 're startled quite,

As though our soul had spoken aloud its long-still woe!

These mystic theories of an idle hour that gave

To ancients their conception of a God, fast grow

In fertile field of thought and by connections grave

Bear truer fruit than seems at first sight to bestow.

I.

Bent like a willow that weighing snow
Of many years hath curved, or the blade
Of Time's famed scythe as the artists show,
Like the drooping flowers that 'gin to fade,
With white silken hair that seeks to hide
The forehead creased with care; but the
 tide

Of sorrow could not efface
The smile that sweetens the kindly face;
At the window grandpa musing sat.
I followed his gaze across the flat
To the sloping steep our churchyard
 crowned,
To the farthest corner, where I knew
Was a well-attended mossy mound,
Where grandma lies, his heart lies too.
I heard him softly sigh and two tears
Were trembling held by his lashes long,
When a step that told of youthful years
Was heard and a face like a joyous song
Peeped in at the open door. "Come, dear,"
And sister Helen came running in,
And grandpa's smile soon chased the tear.
Her hair soft as silk that spiders spin
With its satin pinions prisoning stay
The golden gleam of a summer's day,

And trying to break from bondage sweet,
In confusion her hair is scattered quite
In prettiest way though not so neat,
Embroiders with gold her fur coat white.

"Here 's some flowers I picked for you,"
she said,

"Some are yellow, some are pink, some
red."

He kissed her twice and took the flowers,
He looked them o'er with a word for each,
With words to us given though were not
ours,

As one who speaks to himself alone,
But usurps the gaze of those around,
Of that which but interests him, but would
atone

By dissembling thought in dialogue gowned.

"Ah, simple soothsayers, well you quote

My fate in a sad and doleful note.

But sighs in the alembic of a hopeful heart

Are gilded o'er with thanks, depart

As a smile to soothe another's cross.

Who suffers most can pity more

Than those who have known no lovèd loss.

Come, prophetic blossoms, what 's your
lore?

My happiest days are long since through?

Ah, meadow-saffron, you tell it true!

116 Alieni Temporis Flores

And linked with the blue-bells' constancy
And sorrowing regret the dowry
Of ash-leaved trumpet's loneliness."

II. THE FADED ROSE

"The pretty petals all have dropped away,
But brown and dirty bud is left!"
Thus cries our little Helen, much bereft,
When favorite flowers fade away.

"It seems as though my flowery butterfly,
Afraid that he was born too soon,
Had slipped back into his cocoon."
Right, little one, he does not fade to die.

Our lives are like those roses too,
Some live as long as wills the sun,
By chance some fade though just begun,
And prematurely tire of earthly view.

And older as we grow our graces leave,
And leave us beauteous and sad;
Ah, blessed thought, to make me glad
'T is my cocoon that I begin to weave!

And sorrow's artificial heat will buy
But sooner graces glorified,
To flit in joy to Savior's side.
Ah, cheering truth, I do not fade to die!

III. THE DAISY

Down in a little daisy dell
Down beside the dusty road,
Where brightest flower-fairies dwell
And the seeds by pixies sowed;

There grew a daisy white and gold,
Of which this sweet story 's told.
It may be true or may not be
'T is just as 't was told to me.

With many more of daisy-kind
'T was cut a church to adorn,
By tiny hands for good enshrined,
A heavenly message borne.

It fell unnoticed from the wreath
To the floor beside a pew.
Like drops of dew on heathery heath
That unseen the flowers renew.

It happed that eve there filled this seat
A sinner lonesome and sad.
Here God to-night had turned his feet
To His love this lonesome lad.

118 Alieni Temporis Flores

Beneath his feet the daisy lay
All unconscious doing good,
As trifling deeds if done each day
Would extend to starving food.

A food that faileth not to ease
The soul-sick sinner's disease;
Heavy calls for help when heeded aright
Are answered by efforts slight.

Yes, Daisy was his sister's name,
The sister so dear to him;
A living gospel giving grace
By life like a lengthened hymn.

Where sister, son, and mother met
He alone now silent sat.
He longed for rest, received that rest,
Only a daisy yet did that.

This sin-weed scattered field of life
Makes it hard for flower that grows,
But He, the Holy Husbandman,
Will protect the seed He sows.

ONLY A WHITE ROSE

'T IS just six months since I put a rose,
Entangled it deep in tresses fair,
Ethiopian tresses, where the rose
Shone like a starlet glimmering there.
A token of tryst so strong and true
Implanted in joy no thought of rue.
Inscribed: "The White Rose—sign of purest
love,
Escutcheon of the white wood-dove."

Just half that time and I pinned a rose,
And knotted it strong in a wedlock wreath,
Sacred signet with heavenly light that glows,
Like a diamond set no sign of grief.
A token of tryst so strong and true
Implanted in joy no thought of rue.
Inscribed: "The White Rose—sign of purest
love,
Escutcheon of the white wood-dove."

And now I am putting the same white rose
On a bosom that 's cold in marble mould,

120 Only A White Rose

Where it lies in peace from life's sad throes,
Like the marbled mound on the graveyard's
 snows.

A token of tryst so strong and true
That 's welded more tightly by unlaved rue.
Inscribed: "The White Rose—sign of purest
 love,
Escutcheon of the white wood-dove."

But 't is well—that the white reveals no blush;
That the silence of death, not shameful hush,
Is answer to this my heart's advance;
Bereft by Death's not by Guilt's cursed
 lance.

A token of tryst so strong and true,
That beareth no blot on its *tincture* true,
Inscribed: "The White Rose—sign of purest
 love,
Escutcheon of the white wood-dove."

A SONG OF THE SOUTH

THE birds and bees had ceased their song,
 Afraid of shadows drear and long.
Upon a bench near a cabin's door
A group of colored children sit;
But now they noisily play no more,
Wait till the cabin's candle 's lit.
The quiet of the hour seems
To lead to far more sober dreams.
Each simple mind is filled with thought
The same as we in youth oft caught,
Of golden riches, joy untold,
That farther flee as years unfold.
The light is lit, then comes a call
From mammy dear, then scramble all,
With "Har me is," or "Har comes me."
They 're in the house 'fore you count three.
Around the crude old cabin sit,
Their faces beam by firelight lit,
Attentive wait. There 's grandpa old,
Whose hair is like the winter's snow.
The times of slavery by him told

122 A Song of the South

Have left the marks of weighty woe.
And now he leads the evening prayer,
The simple service far more fair
To glance of God than learnèd law
And conned by clergy wise.
They try not in their faith to find a flaw,
But laden with lowly love prayers rise
Carried along by simple song:
“Listen, Lord, our evening prayer,
Sing it loud in Heaben, Lord,
Sing it for our sister ’s dere,
On dat shore we ’re sailing toward.

“When it ’s dark and quiet-like,
 When the birds have gone to bed,
And the solemn thoughts us strike,
 Listen while our prayer is said.”

The conscience clear and humble heart
Bring blessings to their sleep,—a sleep
That can’t be earned by other art.
Lord, teach me simple love to Thee,
That I more like this folk may be!
The deeper down in theory tied,
The more absorbed and moved our mind,
Sometimes these things will love elide.

THE CHARM OF THE BROOK

A LONG the bending, bubbling brook,
Soft whisp'ring to attentive reeds
That lean, half-grasping mossy nook,
To list the madrigal it pleads;

That gurgling 'neath the feeble bridge,
From which impends a weeded knot
That like cedilla softens tone,
It hums a hymn not light forgot;

Or searching for that wished-for fern
A saucy frog upholds his head,
In studied hauteur tries to learn
The one by profanation led;

That seems to chuckle as we ask
Each other genus of a frond.
And there to aid the stream in task
Some lad had built a bank-walled pond;

We draw from this minute lagoon
A cup that Hebe would have held

124 The Charm of the Brook

In triumph to her lord, but tune
A half-felt doubt of charm it held.

Weave on, thou silver thread in life,
That tinged with sorrow mourns for years
Long past, a happier lace o'er mask
Of cynic mail, no proof 'gainst tears.

And on the beauty blush possessed
Where Nature's fairies have caressed
My soul steals kisses in sweet joy.
A Lethe thou art without alloy!

DYING DANNIE

A STORM had swept o'er Shrewsbury's
shore

For many a weary day,
The white-capped waves in anger tore
As they came from down the bay.

A small, neat sloop at anchor rode,
And bravely she fought the gale;
The waves dashed o'er her streaming deck,
And the ropes in wind did wail.

A fisher's humble home this boat,
With his wife and baby boy.
'Mong storms they lived, at storms they
laughed,—
A storm is the sailor's joy.

But Dannie's sick to-night, and they
A full mile from Sandy Hook.
To reach the shore, the only way,
Since their skiff the wild waves took,

Was but to swim through whirlpools wild,—
But the doctor must be called;
The fisher watched his dying child,
More by grief than storm appalled.

His weeping wife watched stern-set face,
With a fear she dared not show.
He turned,—his tight-shut lips, grave face,
Told 't was vain to murmur "No."

"I 'm going, dear; 't is a fearful fight,
But the Dannie lad will die."
She seized his arm, with strength of fright
At the storm and death so nigh.

He kissed her twice; she bade him stay,
For 't was death to swim that sea;
In voice with love grown soft he said,
"But he 'll die, our baby wee."

And in the sea he found his fears
Were but naught beside the real;
He saw in thought the wife in tears,
And the thought gave strength of steel.

But soon so tired, how sweet to rest,
And his arms gave up their task
And sought his weak and bruised breast,
And the waves his form soon mask.

But sudden starts the sleeping form,
The waves he heard them sighing,
“Poor man, he ’s conquered by the storm,
And Dannie lad is dying!”

No sleeping now, but all alert,
And the waves he flings aside;
What though they bruise and hurt,
The race is against Death’s tide!

The watching life-men on the shore
Noticed something floating near,
And from the greedy gulf him bore,
So far gone for life they fear.

Then ready hands assistance gave
And his tale to them soon told;
A boat and crew they need not crave,
For they offer, young and old.

The doctor saved the Dannie lad,
But he got there just in time;
An hour more and far more sad
Indeed would have been my rhyme.

In after years the tale oft told,
The father ever would say:
“The labor done for love is light,”
We all think that every day.

THE ATLANTIC

THOU remnant of that universal sea
Which cloaked the world before our
history,
At thy great power what tides of thought
awake,
The mind of man its smallness learn you
make.

Thank thee for times in sweet security
You 've borne my bark across your bosom
broad,
When danger held not the dread of maturity,
In youth when nothing feared and nothing
awed.

But now I owe thee something more, for
gifts
No price but love can buy. As Nature
found
No such safe storehouse as thy bed and
drifts—
For study there is mystery in each mound.

There 's planning polyp that martyred makes
the land,

A tiny cell with scarce an organ known,
That, leagued with millions of its kind, and
sand,

Accomplish well what can't be done
alone.

The polyp a lesson preaches us,—that power
Is unity. Each one his part and all
Can do what seems to one like clouds that
lower

Before the summer storm's dread strength
doth fall.

Beneath thy roaring tide 't is fairy-land,
Where water-waving groves hold flowers
and trees,

Each one like stone-turned rainbow band,
That flashes in brightest hues in watery
breeze.

And mountains grim guard vales in deepest
night

Where strangest beasts in safe seclusion
swim,

For study rich but never brought to light,
Not e'en for Science's all-winning whim.

So strong and yet so kind, you smiling stand
The seaming scars that ships by thousands
leave;
Sometimes a frown, but moods move sea and
land,
Sometimes in joy, sometimes so sad we
breathe.

You guard your treasure well as Nature
knew,
But man is bent to find the "how" and
"why."
Old ocean, I have spent my life with you,
And wish a grave in your green groves
when I die.

SHAKESPEARE

SWEET scion of the showy stage,
Whose mellow music holds a theme
Beyond its merely sensual page,
That bids us think as well as dream.

In common course of human code
Philosophers make poets poor,
For motives muffed to fashion's mode
Though pageant proud cannot allure.

But thou hast moulded in each man
A concrete motive or a theme,
But as we carefully, closely scan,
With well-known individuals teem.

You knew each human nature's bent,
And yet bequeathed not of your own.
Why are your works so reticent,
And personal traits so seldom shown?

Your personal puppet was each word
The English tongue can boast, but heard

Conceit with an indifferent air,
And *self* received not usual human care.

The borrowed plots can cast no taint,
As many minds have stooped to try;
The bee that steals the flowers' paint
But borrows to improve its dye.

HIDDEN SORROW

I ONCE was strolling near a stream
Whose usual mood was crystal clear,
And much surprised that silvery gleam
Was mantled with a muddy blear:

I sought the cause of saddening force,
And, near the cradle of its birth,
Where through the elms it earns its course
With tribute to the thirsty earth,

A wind-wrenched bough was part submerged
And yet, half-hung, swayed by the wind,
Stirred up the silt. The stream emerged
With tainted tide and pride inclined.

Years since I sought that rivulet,
The tree was gone, the stream seemed
pure,
But on the bed the sullage set
A shade that ever will endure.

The pure white pebbles now were brown,
Like white rosebuds 'neath calyx screen,
But still as I stood gazing down,
So changed, I think what they have been.

I trembling start in sad surprise;
What mirrored image meets my eyes?
Have I too changed in such a way
Since I was here in former day?

I took a stick and stirred the bed,
Again the stream was sullied slow;
'T was only sleeping and not dead,
That taint received so long ago.

In joyous, unshadowed sky of youth
Sometimes a foreign force will mar,
Will stir a storm that muffs the moon
And ostracizes every star.

The storm abates to thoughtless eyes,
The soul seems full of happiness,
But yet down deep there latent lies
That bitter tinge of undying stress;

And features seen by loving friends
Are marked with something nameless
quite;

The smile has sweeter grown, but tends
To dwell beyond our earthly sight.

It needs but one word, heedless said,
To quicken memories thought as dead,
To stir once more the gulf of grief,
And life 's a maelstrom, rock, and reef.

The snows, the joys that cheer the creek,
Are met with eager, happy eye;
When source is gone, go vainly seek,
For snows like joys must ever die.

And though they swell the surface tide,
In fulness tend the bed to hide,
Unmoved, unameliorated woe
Oft takes this chance to steadily grow.

And sorrow's sullage, though it makes
A soul more sweet when casually read,
Tries hard to mantle hearts that ache,
Lest rueful word should contagion spread.

A PAINTING BY A FRIEND

A SCENE with smiling on its face,
Two gifts of God's all-tender Grace:—
The man-made but enhallowed shrine,
And Nature, ours, but ever Thine.

All clothed with satin robe of white
That Nature drew in dark of night,
An holy altar-cloth, and spread
To teach us softened, thoughtful tread.

The Sabbath stillness reigns supreme
As in some sweet and happy dream,
And seems its quiet to diffuse
Upon my soul as I look and muse.

The fane, one of those precious few
To old world give sublimity,
But slight, for ceded faith, the new,
That scorned restraint for liberty.

The evergreens form background meet,
Now spangled with a thousand gems

A Painting by a Friend 137

Enhancing simple dignity
Of church that proud display condemns.

A far more suited ornament
To show the people's worshipping will,
To faith a better monument
Than gilded pane and marbled sill.

SIMPLE WORSHIP

I NEED no grand enmarbled shrines
Where eyes are sovereign to the soul,
Whose grandeur in our prayer entwines,
And form must fashion pious rôle.

But God's best altar 's in the wood,
All service there is true and good.
I well remember service there,
An hour in sweet informal prayer.

The worshippers attentive seem,
The scene is silenced at their wish,
As floating leaf lingers in stream
Held steady by nipping, leaping fish.

So every noise abeyance felt,
While all creation thoughtfully knelt,
This worship reigned a moment long
And then the choir raised heartfelt song.

With baton no director metes,
The tune was timed by glad heart-beats;

The part each took not voice decreed,
Nor any written staff they need;

The scales have fallen from their eyes,
The rod and staff that leadeth them
Are sent from Him within the skies;
Not that we would these things condemn,

But when the very soul and heart
Are dressed to fashion's robes and gowns
'T is time that world and I should part
To pious woods from 'sembling towns.

AT TWILIGHT

BALANCED day and evening now they
swing,
Twilight shadows around me cling,
Melodious memories softly bring,
And to my resting spirit sweetly sing.

Loath to leave her fading field seems day,
Strives still, and for an instant seems to stay
Drear Darkness' approaching fated sway,
But Nature rules and Nature has her way.

Thus memory, lingering, held by sadness
E'er regrets our souls to leave,
Till the Lord in all His goodness
Helps our heavy hearts not grieve.

THE AMŒBA

THOU tiniest taste of Nature's scheme,
Tell us the secret of Life's dream
As you know it, who unseen,
Except by those with man-made eyes,
Live on while centuries pass between,
While man but moment lives then dies.
With scarce one organ thou art made,
Yet, used in praises justly paid
To Him who made both you and me;
Live on in silent, sweet content.
With what a thoughtful memory
Has Nature all in wisdom sent!
Can it be that thou, so simple, small,
Art forefather of animals all;
The Poi-de-Stoi on which there rests
The solution of Darwin's thought,
Changed with countless centuries' tests
In other forms thy comfort sought?

THE WHIP-POOR-WILL

O H, daylight-exiled bird, what hast thou
done,

That thou art so afraid of the sun?

Are rumors of thine occult powers true?

When evening hides from curious view,

All muffed in brown cabalistic coat

And drawing burly head down close,

Straining with mournful - meaning charms
your throat,

Art then invoking vengeful woes?

I creep close to your low-built home,

Where you in study spend the day,

Awaiting dark to spell the starry dome,

And see you stand within the ray

Of light the moon steals through the trees to
look;

Inspired with theme, you surely look

Far larger than you are, and musing sit;

My presence speech will not permit.

The Whip-Poor-Will 143

And then as, scorning ignorant company,
He fleetly flies away from me,
The "Mariner's Spectre Ship" made far
more sound,
Then sepulchral quiet steals around,
Commanding e'en the leaves their fluttering
cease;
Then from some distant shadowy trees
I hear the mournful cadence once again;
I scarce can blame the superstitious men.

THE HILLS OF CLIFTON, ENGLAND

ABOVE the Avon's fickle tide,
Where at noon mighty vessels ride,
At eve aught but a play-yacht 's barred,
So vast its change. It hurries out,
Then back it flows as if to guard
'Gainst time, this wrought about
By freshening every day
So age its stream can't stay.

Above this restless river's bank,
Towering sublime on either flank,
In contrast to the changing stream
Stands still the same that centuries saw,
Of which e'en science may but dream,
The hill of classic Clifton's tales.

They scoff at Time nor deign
By refreshment to gain.

Grand gates that guard this busy brook,
Following it through pretty bend and crook;
The green of foliage on the hill
Meets green from river just below.

The Hills of Clifton, England 145

The trees the stream with shadows fill
'Cept where the sun steals through to glow.
The hills with trees and flowers
Make perfect fairy-bowers.

These, too, are books with memories deep
That from a hundred centuries' sleep
Now willing wake for us to read,
The tales of life in ages old,
And waiting minds to wisdom lead.
Think, Solomon knew what ants retold;
We take a bit of stone,
Tell when and how 't was sown.

Crayon is from chalk often made
And Clifton's hills in chalk conveyed
To man a view that artists shun,
And ere their work is half begun
These hills invade for pigments old,
That pictures of the past unfold.

ECCLESIASTES XI., I.

CAST crumbs upon the sea, they 'll swim
to shore for thee,
A penny spent will bring reward fit for a
king.

What though some sink, the greater part will
blessings be,
The crumbs that sink in sweeping 'long
the bed take time.

A book in path of brother bound for darkest
doom,
With word of hope might move in mem-
ory's mind
Of time when grace lit life that now is naught
but gloom,
And there a fertile field for growing gos-
pel find.

THE PHYSICIAN

WHO toils so much for others' pains,
Braves all wild winds and raging rains,
To lighten some poor suffering soul,
And mind and body's cross condole?

Who stands beside that death-wrapped bed
With moistened eyes but stern-set lips,
Supports in hands his listening head,
To watch each breath from pallid lips?

And then when death at last comes nigh,
And poor sick sinner fears to die,
Who points to Him who comforts all,
And takes away thoughts that appall?

'T is he whom God commission gave
His children's burning brow to lave,
And last when heavenly power prevails
Lead them to Him who never fails.

ON THE RIVER

A LONE, alone, I 'm all alone,
And many, many miles from home.
My shell scarce swims a finger's length
In the sluggish stream whose utmost
strength

Seems spent to make the silence stronger,
And, too, the way from home the longer.
In mind the scene will long abide:
Tall trees make fringe on either side,
The stream with bubbling bend conspires
With trebled trees in waving spires
To close me in a copse so fair
Not oft the landscape-fairies spare.
But now, when 't is in sleep so still
The breeze scarce shakes the stubborn trees,
There 's naught disturbs sweet memory's
will.

The time is that when thought best moves,
As conquered day her force removes;
Softly sinks the golden sun to rest
Behind yon forest's leafy crest,

Slowly retreats like a stag at bay,
Loath to leave the fast-departing day.

Now the glory fades from us away.

It is twilight and darkening falls
The summer night. Fast across
The vistas wavering shadows glide
To the waiting darksome walls,
Where the trembling water seeks to hide.
There comes a sadness over me
That soothes as well as pains.
Methinks in the tiny waves I see
A picture, so sweet my gaze it gains,
Smiling up at me, oh, so wistful!
The lips move! I bend to catch the sound,
The word of comfort and of love
That I was wont to hear; around
The shadows start to disappear;
Fainter grows the image dear.
"Mother, mother," I lean and call,
But o'er Luna the cutains fall,
The darkness comes, and I 'm alone.
Sadly I turn away, a groan
Ill-suppressed upon my lips
And soft a whisper slips,—
"Absent, and yet in love how near!"

A WINDY DAY

SWEET, brush those truant tresses 'way
That fall like graceful night soft down,
To hide the eyes of brown, where day
Is glancing forth in sunbeam gown.

Their own lash, modest mantle, shades
Enough, 'neath which the beams retreat
And all the light demurely fades
Into a dreamy thought so chaste and
sweet.

Or is the wind trying to drape
With your silky raven locks as crape,
For laughter that died from your eyes
At what you knew e'er words apprise?

I 'll brush those truant tresses 'way,
'T is time for mourning not this day;
The eyes I know burn quite as bright,
Not laughter, but with true love light.

OUR MARTYRED STATESMAN

THOU too, so strong, so good, so great,
Must feel assassin's cursèd power.
We sing with feeling songs of state,
"Land of the noble free," whose tower
Of strength is freedom borne,—too free
So deep in seeming safety grown,
Our eyes are blind, we cannot see
The murderers e'en around our throne.

For one like thee death comes not hard,
But such an end we mourn far more
Than death in battle sung by bard,
Assassination shames e'en war!
Around thy tomb are tearfully laid
The wreaths the world hath joined to
weave,
But thou hast crowns that cannot fade,
And earth's for brighter laurels you leave.

The world is sad, the world is sad,
To think it holds such creatures bad,

152 Our Martyred Statesman

Who Moloch-like do murder make
For murder's sake. But not alone
We weep, our sympathies awake
To hear a mourning woman's moan,
In vain she watching waits for him
Through eyes that touched with tears are
dim.

The mighty oceans ceaseless roll,
And caduke cliffs are crushed to dust,
That carried by the tide is dropped
And tied by Time forms new earth-
crust.
Thus rock destroyed returns to rock.
So Nature e'er transitions try,
E'en shifts the seeming staple stock;
Why wonder, then, that we must die?

From silt of streams by centuries' cement
closed
Come learnèd lessons of the past.
So when *your* past is left exposed
Ideals of character are cast,
To lift the world from sinful sand
A step, a stride, to stronger stand.
Such men are given of God
That we might walk where they have trod.

Our Martyred Statesman 153

The world rolls on and seasons slip,
And ne'er cæsura take; there seems
To be a something lost, our lip
Can't form the pathos felt. But beams

Of light and truth are guiding shed
To make a model manhood plain.
Rest thee, with all our martyred dead,
With Lincoln, Garfield, and the *Maine*.

LORD, GIVE US CHEER

'T IS dark and drear and sad to-night,
Lord, linger near, make bright
When memories murmur in mine ear
Long past though ever here.

Teach of that holy home on high,
So thoughts like these may die.
Give us one glimpse of loved ones lost
To soothe our souls storm-tossed.

In sadness sunk, teach us to pray
With humble, thankful heart;
Give thanks that things are not far worse
To bear Lord, cheer impart!

A NATURE PARADOX

THOU bird-beaked beast,¹ what canst
thou be,
Where shouldst thou dwell, on land or sea?

Could Nature make mistake like this,
So careful seldom makes a miss?

Of form both bird and beaver made,
But cannot fly, can only wade.

We have dull days when senses sleep,
Whate'er we do scarce aught we reap.

Discouraged Nature may have borne
Thee when she felt as we, forlorn.

¹ *Ornithorhynchus paradoxus*.

'T IS PROFITABLE

WHY wander wearily along,
Encumbered so with care?
But join the e'er-rejoicing throng,
Ennumbered sing your share.

Why travel sunk in sin, a tramp,
Through dark and endless night?
Take Jesus as your guiding lamp,
He 'll lead your feet aright.

You may become a prince with God
While sin no tribute gives;
The man of God with peace is shod,
The sinner suffering lives.

THE HERMIT-THRUSH

SUPERIOR rival of the nightingale,
Sad anchorite of forest's gloom,
But once I 've heard your songs sublime.

All fail

To weave in their poetic loom
A laurelled crown for your sublimest songs,
But give to him what you belongs.

Within the grand cathedral of the wood
When day draws down her monk's gray
hood

And night becomes, then rise your evening
hymns,

Inspire to cast aside all whims
And kneel in worship meet. The forest
prays,

Subdued by your soul-reaching lays.

Well may you jealous be of song you frame
And like a great composer play
To dearest friends before you give it name.

158 The Hermit-Thrush

One note like that again I pray,
One moment wrapped in such soul-stirring
 bliss
Were worth a lifetime such as this.

VICTORIA

THIS world is like a book,
And its pages are its men ;
And the common men make the printed
page,
And the pictured are the famed ;
And we interest take in the studied age
From the pictures that are named.

A blessed chapter this
That contains Victoria's face ;
She held England's throne, but earth 's
proud to own
Humble homage to her mace,
Which, as by the custom royal,
Was borne ahead, but by angels loyal.

Her power encompassed the world,
And respect was mingled with love
That was formed by her mercy and grace.
And the world with those above
As she left her "well-run race"
Wept the tears so sweet and soft.

LONGFELLOW

MY thought upon mind's sea lies motion-
less

As model bark with broken oars adrift.
I fain would find the words my love can't
confess,
My unconceit even for love won't lift.

All has been far more sweetly said than I
Can ever hope to say. I would that mine
Were immortal words, that I in love might
lay

A trifling tribute to those gifts divine.

Those poems that perennial blessings live,
Acknowledge only one, one sweeter gift,
And that 's your life, that humble life of love
That, lived for others, helps our labors lift.

Beside your never-dying songs I 'll lay
My words that cannot live but for a day.
My cycle cast to precepts you have taught
May reach result that you in writing sought.

The love, respect, that 's deep within our
 mind
 Cannot of words a suited sentence find;
 For thoughts that hold of heart the largest
 part
 Are those that are not shared, that are not
 bared.

THE FOREST FIRE

I STOOD at twilight on a cloud-caressing
hill
And watched the Furies fling their forces up
the steep,
The woods with hell-personifying horror fill,
With sound like thousand demons awful,
loud, and deep,
Broken sometimes by shrill, heart-rending,
frightened cry,
As some poor furred or feathered victim fell
to die
A martyr's death. The kings unfriendly,
Frost and Fire,
Have blended might to further funeralize
attire
Of earth in mourning muffed for Summer's
much-moaned death.
Hath Vulcan from Vesuvius' failing forge,
which rains
Of million storms must have allayed, moved
smelting-shop

To curious covert of our low unmounted
 chains
 Of wood, that he may case dear Nature base
 to top
 With an impenetrable suit of mail to
 stand
 The weight of wintry war? As fiendish
 flood o'erflowed
 And drowned the sister cities twain of Italy's
 land,
 So now on million helpless homes with year's
 food stored
 Sweeps unremorseless flame. Few escape
 through galleried grots,
 Their homes by habit, safe from outside
 wrath, but lots
 More die. The setting sun with all its glory
 fades
 Before the scene that in abeyance holds
 night's shades.
 At last its seeming insatiate lust is all ap-
 peased
 And slow withdraws its passioned power.
 The sun at morn
 With timid step ascends to throne on high,
 angered,
 And looks with misty eyes at woods of
 beauty shorn.

A blackened plain with here and there sur-
viving fires,
That looks like dark foreboding sky on
stormy night,
With one or two brave-hearted stars that
show their fires
In calm defiance to the awful gale's fell
might.

A TEXT FOR THOUGHT

WHY can't we live to thought expressed
In David's song, one-thirty-three:—
“How good for us all brothers rest
And live in godly unity!”

Why not our neighbors' best parade,
And let their faults at rest lay laid?
Think of the man relieved from debt
Who pressed his poorer brother yet.

Don't think in this you 'd be alone,
There 's always one for smiles a-search;
They look to you when you they meet
For smiles on street as well 's in church.

THE CYNIC

L AUGH not at cynic's sneers,
He paid a price for them,
For each a hundred tears.
His coldness don't condemn;

'T is struggling soul's last stand
Against a sea of grief.
Cried he at its demand
Would drown without relief.

Better to face a foe
With a defiant mien
Than walk with footsteps slow
Upon a death unseen;

The cold and haughty head,
Than one bowed with its weight,
For guilt can *hang* a head,
It may not be sorrowed state.

By snows the willow 's staved,
By oak defiant braved;
Which adds to forest's grace,
The grieved or changeless face?

SPEAKING

WHAT joy in speaking ships at sea,
Without, how sad the voyage would
be!

We look, we yearn for speaking signs
That tell of friends in legible lines.

The smallest speck of smoke 's a hope,
That broadens till a ship we see,
Or slipping streams like suds of soap
Their trail on seeming trackless sea.

When met the joyful greetings sent
By small dyed rags for a time thought lent,
But, too, a silent signal 's met,
No sense but feeling knows its set.

It soothes our homesick souls, relieves
The scene, light blue above all day,
With dark at night that it receives
To match the ever dark-blued bay.

'T is link that joins through all mankind,
That thought of mutual sympathy;
And travellers more that friendship find
With joy to banish apathy.

LOUIS J. AGASSIZ

WHILE yet in childhood's glory
I a sweet story read,
Of one now lives in glory,
Whose memory reigns instead ;

How he while yet a lad
His native country left,
But while the world was glad
His mother was bereft.

He left to find the gifts
That Nature him unfolds,
And he the curtains lifts
And fame and wisdom moulds.

But not content to keep
The knowledge to him lent,
His thoughts the nations reap
In marvelling wonderment.

He whom the world reveres
Was born in Pays de Vaud ;

There learned in youngest years
God's gifts not to avoid.

And growing, studying aimed
To following worlds a way,
And Natural History claimed
Her dearest devotée.

And then from weeping worlds
He stole with sad, sweet songs
From earth to Nature whirls,
She claims what her belongs.

I read, I thought; I come
To tread his trail. No fame
But just content in some
Ways mark my life the same.

We cannot all be like
This one whom follow we,
But we can love the work
Blest with his memory.

LOST IN THE WOODS

'T IS sad indeed in forest to be lost
And wandering weak and comfortless
along,
With none to cheer or chide, or count the
cost
Of injuring thoughts that to lost hope
belong;
And dragging self with pain through tearing
thorn
Laugh loud at wildcat's glaring eye and
tooth.
For when to man's mind a dreadful death
is borne,
He watches wearily as though forsooth
The fact to him was of importance shorn.
And all things hap as in a dream,
The vaguest fancies find their way to him,
And every leaf and limb do mocking seem,
They look so like in shaded light so dim.
At last so weak, scarce able more to stand,
Falls faintly on the ground, starts in surprise
At familiar marks on his every hand,
And sees with half-unconscious eyes
The same, same spot he 'd left at sunrise.

THE VIOLIN

'T WAS a quiet evening and almost clear,
But a shadowy mist was musing
And swaying in doubt from a June-born fear
Of spoiling an eve so happy.
Through its gossamer the stars sat still and
thought

Like a spider from gauze-throne watching.
And thrills of joy the evening had wrought,
The mists in a sadness were weaving;
A sadness that lifts from a sordid life,
From a sphere of drear straining and strife,
To ethereal realms where the worlds all
revolve

With the sweetest music sighing:
As the notes of the west wind to-night re-
solve

Into chords with a heavenly harmonizing.
I wandered listlessly along

The country road that winding,
Charmed by the bounding brooklet's song,
Invited not the idle thronging

Who in the distance lazily strolled
Along the social highway.
No leaping pulse but quiet-souled
My mind led in contempt from the gay.

When close beside the listening lane
I heard a violin playing;
And creeping close, saw, through the pane
Of cot both small and hiding
Within the trees, a gray-haired man;
So old already seeing
To Heaven's gate, his glad bow ran
To rhyme with angel's hymning.

My soul unbound and throbbing with the
theme
Was led in gladsome travels like a dream.
One moment silent by a woodland stream
I catch its lyric verse from silvery gleam;
Then musing, wrapped in solemn thought
and deep,
I climb some mist-web-captured mountain-
steep,
And hear the winds moan music minster-
deep,
Like amens from cathedral's archèd keep.

Or nightingales in upward flight repeat
Sonatas sung by whirling worlds whose beat

Thrills through our hearts on nights like
these. Then sweet
And cheering chirp of robin modest, neat.
Through all of Nature's gamut my heart
sings
In answer to the calls from charmèd strings.
My longing soul leaps forth, in sweet strife
brings
My mind to peace, aside all earth-thought
flings.

The cunning mist entangled the quiet night;
My minstrel stopped his playing;
His face upturned with smiles alight,
He seemed in peace of sleeping;
But something strange came o'er me,
I stepped to where he was sitting,
I touched him: "Father, peace with thee,"
His forehead 's cold, unfeeling!

Ay, dead! And could a mortal feel
Such heavenly thoughts inspiring
As he had brought from senseless steel
On that unearthly evening!
Could a mere man so play and live?
Whene'er I hear the thrilling
Of a violin, to Heaven I give
My soul that 's toward it striving.

The violin 's the earth-brought chord
Of music of the spheres,
That gives in life a higher ford
On which Heaven in answer nears.

MANDOLIN MEMORIES

SERENADE I

MY mandolin's tremolos their thrill impart
To my subdued, expectant heart,
And touch with tumult my uncertain mind,
As leaves are tossed by playful wind.

The stern old castle wraps his shadow-gown
And seems to shiver at the chill
Of ghostly light that circled moon sends
down,
That suits his cold reserve so ill.

The meagre breeze scarce *teases* smooth-spun
moat,
The silence seems to shrill my note;
I would an accompanying bird were singing
near!
Music must ever modesty fear.

But rose-like in its dark, forbidding bud
That peeps through opening walls at day,

178 Mandolin Memories

Yon lintel looses hold of latticed shade,
Charmed by the song that love hath made.

A heart hath heard my lay, although unseen
I know she lists. The castle's frown
To me is now dispelled, the friendless scene
Hath changed, in beauty all has grown.

The graceless heath-bells' lavender coat I see
Like Mist-flowers clothed in beauty,
Whose every leaf 's a heart. The moat, the
trees,
Attempt to drown the tuneful breeze.

A timid hand slow opes the shutter wide,
And Orpheus-like I listening bide,
The lintel calls her modest maid
And my Eurydice hath strayed.

SLEEPING BEAUTY ON THE LAKE

SERENADE II

AS if on wind-blown leaf we float,
No breeze-born bubble frights our boat.
'T is though a sage, deliberate snail
Was master in the art of sail.

No sound except when loving tide
Throws murmuring kisses on our bow,
As though in friendship to confide
The secret of her placid brow.

Unmarred to-night by fretting frown,
That comes when in unequal fight
She tries the quarrelsome wind to drown;
The peaceful west wind reigns to-night.

A curious longing seems to fill
The night, uneasy at the rest
Unworld-like, but must needs be still
At meditation's strange behest.

180 Sleeping Beauty on the Lake

Not e'en the lance-like call of loon,
'T is though the world were in a swoon,
Like storied maid who pricked her hand
With venom'd spindle, witches' brand.

And dare I on my waiting strings
Strike chords that virgin love will sing,
The kiss that will disperse the spell,
And wake the choir I love so well?

A suited setting for our Lydian lays,
The mandolin's soft, low murmuring,
Transporting soul to dreamy days
To come, or past, which happier ring.

THE STORM NEAR THE CORNISH COAST

THE bold-winged gulls with frightened cry
To the creviced chalk cliffs fly,
To the havens safe from the raging waves
In the weather-chiselled caves.
It seems that the Lord to warn the weak
Hath given them power to speak,
They in trumpet tones the caution bear
“Beware, beware, beware.”

Then came a lurid tongue of flame,
The storm-god's dreaded sword,
That rending the hurrying storm-clouds
came
And with red the black sky gored.
Their anguished groan shook the mountain-
heights,
And the sea was flecked with foam,
Then came the rain down in unchecked
flights
Beating back the angered comb.

SARGOSSA SEA

A STRETCH of sea o'ergrown with weeds,
A false appearing solid leads
The mind a mocking mainland see,
As many a show by world set forth
Substantial seems though quicksands be.
This tricky tract Sargossum filled,
Which eye thinks hard though foot sees soft,
Has passed for fields and meadows oft
To please the sailor's eye.

Thou grewsome grave of hundred ships
Denied a decent death, denied
A burial too, but scornfully left
Towed by the undertaker Tide.
No tombstones grace thy graves. Thou art
Thine own memorial monument.
'T were better if on native land
The storm to nobler death had sent
Instead of this sarcastic strand.

THIS BAB-EL-MANDEB

“UNLATCH this *gate of tears*,” I cry,
“This world of sob and sigh;
Why must I wait while friendships die
And happiness decry?”

The waves of sorrow rise,
Bear down before my eyes
The friends I love, and still my cries,
And still the tides uprise.

There moans my friend in tears,
With sorrow past his years,
And sympathy traced by *my* tears
But my life's etching rears.

But on the angry waves
That he so vainly braves
I see a form who ever saves—
He walks the watery paves!

A voice divine in will
Speaks, “Peace, peace, be thou still!”
The storm subsides, a restful rill,
And hope smoothes o'er the ill.

FORGET-ME-NOT

'T IS but a Christmas card of long ago,
A verse or two entwined with mistle-
toe,—

But ah, what memories linger, sweet but sad,
Yes, sad, though joined today when all was
glad.

And on the cover lies the link 'tween now
and yesterdays,
In faintest blue and bound in straggling
sprays,
Forget-me-nots.

And Christmas comes and Christmas goes
'tween now and then,
But like that one will never come again.
And life her weary trials hath given till they
A thorny thicket make and mar the way,
But through that tearing thicket's seeming
close-entangled thorn
There shines a spray unfaded and untorn,—
Forget-me-nots.

No, no, not yet, not e'er will I forget,
However close hangs life's care-carrying net.
I wander lonesome through the flowered
fields,
Enjoy the blessèd blooms that this field
yields,
But there is one more loved than these and
one that cannot die,
'T is that sweet spray that brings the past
so nigh—
Forget-me-nots.

ZOÖLOGY

THERE 'S a song that sounds oh, how
sweet!

And it 's sung by the birds to my heart,
And the bees and the bugs they take part
In syllables meet.

And the moths and the butterflies bright
Trill the tune in aërial flight,
Though the force of their voice is so light
We can't hear.

'T is a work that is teeming with joy,
As its God's blessed creatures we view,
And we call them by name and we learn
All they do.

We write down each one's failings and faults
In the way that the Lord notes our lives,
And our mind from the lessons they teach
Good derives.

Still Hyotomy 's not pleasant work,
But there 's never a song e'er so sweet
That can all the discords well shirk
In harmony sweet.

For we pay for life's pleasures full well
With a pain for a smile and a kiss,
For there 's only one place that 's all bliss,—
That 's in Heaven.

So the good of this song hides the bad,
We can render the discords some way
That they mix with the harmonies glad
And are lost.

And a song that is sung in this way
Is more sweet to the ear and the mind,
For the chords that are borne by the wind
Are the rhymed.

If you look with unsophistried eyes
The affairs of this life harmonize,
And the taint of a discord is hid
By the joys.

For the Christ in His sojourn on earth
Suffered pain and adversity's thrust,
So we 'll work and forget the bad
As we trust.

THE MATCH BOY

'T WAS but a lad, a lonely lad and young,
Too young to march the weary miles
to sell
The matches which he holds, but needs re-
quired.
He sits all-tired beside a stone-walled well.

The country 's bare from winter's raging
war,
The evening 's cold, and stars and moon
belie
The snows enshrouded deep within the
clouds,
That watch with eager eyes the time to
fly.

" My mamma 's with those stars, but papa 's
not,
Oh, I 'm so 'fraid he never will be there!
Why can't I find a way to walk up there?
The people sing about a golden stair.

“They must have matches up in Heaven,”
he said;

“I heered a wise man say some stars was fed
With light by friction’s force, and that
word ’s wrote

On each these little boxes that I tote.

“Oh, one ’s gone out! Sometimes my
matches fail;

They ought to hold their hands to stop
the wind,

It must be blowin’ hard up there,—and me,
I ’m cold, so cold, and no warm place to
find.

“I wonder where ’s that star that mother
knew?

She said it showed to lead the shepherds true
When Christ, the babe of Bethlehem, was
born,—

Why cannot I to-night in Heaven be born?”

The morning came all dressed in mourning
white

That He had sent, the birthright of the
night.

The village church-bells rang for Easter
prayer,

All Nature lay in worship still and fair.

Upon the road they found the little lad ;
 With solemn rite they laid him with the
 dead,
And noticed on the face so usually sad
 In place of frown a sweet smile reigned
 instead.

The stars that hid before the snow had led
 The weary one to worship at His feet.
Their work completed then they mournfully
 fled
 And hid their heads within their blue
 retreat,—

Too tender to watch the undertaker cloud
While weaving slow his soft and pure-white
 shroud.
And all was quiet on that Easter morn,
But joy in Heaven for there a saint was born.

THE WRECK

IN sea-sand steeped all but the deck,
washed white,
And bathed in moonlight, silvery blue,
There stands a victim of some stormy night,
That mocking wind thus homeward blew.

The scene is one to wake the saddened
thought,
A boat in black upon a snow-white strand,
And sea ashine in silver light, moonwrought,
That leaps in diamond fire to land.

I read from rotten timbers there a tale
Of homes, and many mothers there
Who watched and waited for sons' home-
bound sail,
Till sorrow touched with snow their hair.

I 've many friends who 've gone the same
sad way—
This scene recalls their fate to me.

How large a share of sorrow can we lay
Against the all-avenging sea!

The cold, stern, unrelenting sea stayed still,
But silent claims from fight the spoils,
And mourning mothers, weeping wives,
ne'er will
Bring back the lost from out its toils.

The stars look sadly down, the waves break
low,
And round the wreck in soft tones sing.
They sorrowed seem for what they 've done,
And tears of foam upon it fling.

THE HEAVENLY SOLDIER'S HOPE

WHAT joy we 'll feel when, fighting o'er,
We march to Heaven for mustering
out,
And arms and armor need no more,
But march to time's triumphant shout.

No more the tempting foe to fight,
No more to brave the battle's blight,
But ranged 'fore God in sage review
Receive for work our well-earned due.

Meet eulogy for banners borne
Unwavering through the stirring strife,
That tell in lines unstained, though torn,
That God was leader all through life.

And then back from the weary war
We 'll meet our mothers waiting there,
We 'll find them standing on the shore
With all our loved ones over there.

A TRAGEDY

ONE time these two were lovers true,
And now they meet again.
He came the cold heart back to sue
That all might be as then.

His pleading pulsed with eloquence
That only love can give,
But she with torturing diffidence
Refused to bid him live.

He turned to hide a shaming tear,
Oft wooed, ne'er won, by fear,
Then made with manner dazed and slow
The brave resolve to go.

She took his sword from off the stand
(Placed there when he came in)
With laughing lips and careless hand,
That he had hoped to win:

Held out the blade, which he refused,
Standing as one that mused.

“ Why don’t you go, why do you wait?
I ’m tired, ’t is growing late.”

’T were better had she plunged the steel
 Into that manly breast,
Than words which time or art can never heal,
’T were better, ah, yes, ’t were best.

“MEDITATION, DAY AND NIGHT”

THROUGH the weary work of day
I am thinking, Lord, of Thee,
And at night these sweet thoughts stay,
For I know Thou think'st of me.

Whether in the forest's gloom
With the savage beasts around,
Or sit safely in my room,
I have always there Thee found.

Ever present in my thought,
E'en when most absorbed in work;
For what work 's without Thee wrought?
In all work life-lessons lurk.

In the morning, noon, and night
On Thy word I meditate,
So 's to aid the battle fight
And help to Heaven's gate.

DESPAIR NOT

WHY weep o'er wasted past,
A shadow sad o'er future cast,
For one mistake make life all rue?
There 's ever something we can do.

To nurse regret through hours long
For one lost act of good—'t is wrong.
You failed to help,—try something new :
There 's ever something we can do.

If offered help but brings disdain
God knew your thought, 't is still your gain ;
Others still ask for love from you :
There 's ever something we can do.

We sometimes turn God's love away :
He sighs, but bears with us each day.
Assist, it makes no difference who,—
There 's ever something we can do.

EULOGY

I WOULD not be a flower
And grace the loveliest bower;
I would not wish that fame
That lauds and prints your name.

'T is poor, poor pay at best,
Nor doth respect attest,
Set up for common show
To find out what you know.

I 'd rather be a tree
In lonely woodland glade,
That 's seen its sixth century,
Its quiet history made.

And there in neighbor's love
I 'd turn my head above;
My deeds make no great sound,
But blessings give all round.

'T is all we ask of you—
To give our work its due.

We give you outlined thought
On which to think you ought.

The greatest of rewards
Would be, to see you all
Lead to the Lord and Lord's
In answer to *our* call.

THE SARACEN TO HIS SWORD

“O H, model of the new-born moon,
 Make low my foemen's tide,
As in the mighty sun at noon
 The rose fell faint and died.
The hated horde have halted just in view,
As sharks around a dying crew.

“Remember how you served my sires
 And flash once more to-day,
Like sun upon the gilded spires
 When Allah calls to pray.
And may thy sickled form new courage gain
To reap the hated hostile grain.

“Thy handle 's set with lucky-stones,
 May their color e'er be bright!
Like those around my fathers' thrones
 That shine with celestial light.
Remember those who wait our return with
 fame—
Thou wouldst not let it be in shame!”

THE MEXICAN MAID

THE raven tresses flowing full and free,
That traitorous rebosa cannot hide,
Cast twilight shade on the rounded beauty
Of her face, where fleeting feelings peep
and hide.

And eyes e'er holding commune with the
mind
Reflect each momentary emotion there,
Or as toward some retreating theme inclined
Defy all reading efforts thoughts to share.

Ah, twilight is your realm of life, O maid,
Forerunner of a beauteous tropic night,
When brave romances mounted on the shade
Come chasing after fast retreating light!

But fickle knights they are but twilights
too,
And soon retreat to draw their swords and
woo

In other ranks and other realms where shades
With trembling shadows mark the fickle
 maids.

The tropic twilight is its moonlight eve,
 A tremor 'tween the daylight and the
 dark.

Its love a nervous passion cannot weave,
 The restless rose can't keep its beauty
 mark.

THE MEETING-HOUSE

HERE by the brook that only hath re-
pelled
The mark of flying years, where spot is
knelled
With ugly stumps that once were towering
trees,
The meeting-house still stands, but ill at
ease.

The door that welcomed, in the years gone
by,
The simple folk, all friends, come here in
prayer,
By stormy vandals sieged doth prostrate lie,
That through the breach go rushing here
and there.

The conquered countries all their fashions
take
From victor's mode, and elements here
make

204 The Meeting-House

The changes suited to their different style,
But kindly give our work long years of trial.

Where hung the muslin shades are tapestries
Like those that on our panes the frost doth
 freeze,
And busy spiders take the place of hands
Long folded in sweet rest at death's de-
 mands.

The circled woof that orb-knitters have
 spun,
Concentric circles round and round they run;
Or conic nests of finest textile braid,
That weavers of the funnel-web have made.

And they who used to frequent this dear
 place
 Have spun each one his web and circled
 by,
Wider, farther, until he ran his race,
 Then crawled toward natal homestead,
 there to die.

From chimney wrinkled, bent with age,
 I hear the thunder of the nesting swifts,
Each at unwelcome visitant in rage
 A discontented murmur noisily lifts.

The Meeting-House 205

The floor is covered with a brocade brown,
Embroidered with a neat design, well
made
By feet of curious crows who 've wandered
in
To aid the wind-blown dust a carpet spin.

Between where crows'-feet left their fleur-
de-lis
A tinier tracked design I knowing see;
The mice have also craftsmen then become;
They usually strive all handiwork to o'er-
come.

And we who met here in the years gone by
We crows'-feet bear, for Time don't always
fly.
These interspersed with deep-drawn lines of
care
That speak of changes our poor lives must
bear.

DREAMS

WITH closed eye
 I sit and sigh
When day is done and night is nigh,
And eyeless see
What eyes can't see,
Those sweet, sad scenes of memory.

And rove again
O'er moor and fen,
Or run the wildcat to its den.
What frightens me
Then gave but glee;
Eye followed by the foot so free.

Or Dover's doves
Which the sailor loves;
From songless cries the shrillness dies
Though seas between,
We 're hard to wean,
Their song 's most sweet in memory's scene.

The mountains high
That pierce the sky,
Half held by earth and half by sky,
All give a stone,
Of life a part loan
To inlaid structure of mine own.

The past prepares
From present cares
Her banner bright; that bears
Us through to-day.
Thus rest find I,
Till at the Dawn, whose night is nigh.

HIDDEN BEAUTY

HOW oft from verdure-vault I 've dug
Some bashful beetle or a bug,
Whose bright empurpled coats refuse
The sun's light in prismatic hues!

All men have eyes and yet see not
One half the beauty of the earth,
But with the trustlessness of Lot,
From plenty toil to gain a dearth.

How oft a dusty, time-soiled tome
Found in some uninviting home
Hath willed a wealth of thought and wit,
That in our Senate now might sit!

Most beauty's modest, must be shown
Appreciation and respect,
Repelling all who come alone
With curious eyes and deference neglect.

BOATING SONG

OUR sails are gently filling,
Blown by the breeze,
The spray o'er bow distilling,
Its milk-white frieze.

Our bark o'er foam in flying
Sails silvery seas;
As if mean earth defying,
To Cloudland flees.

A song in joy we 're singing
To white-winged craft;
Blest bird, us homeward bringing,
To loved ones waft.

And now our sails we 're trimming
For landing sweet;
O'er still, smooth water skimming,
Our friends to greet.

NATURE'S OWN NATION

THE smoky sky of an Indian-summer's
day

A hazy halo o'er the fields now weaves,
Like camp-fires built by squaws on rainy
day,

When wet had drenched the brush and
leaves.

And fancy finds me forms of flying men
Pursuing through the woods the frightened
deer.

'T is now the braves, so like the winter wren,
Were wont to gather food for winter drear.

And harvested stacks of corn arranged in rows
Make ideal wigwams for imagined men;
And round the top the silk-entasselled bows
Seem trophies set in tepee's top again.

But long since gathered to their fathers they,
And council's fire that blazed in former day

Hath burned away ; a saddened few attest
That most have gone toward setting sun and
rest.

Dear Nature's noblemen were they, whose
mail,

Simplicity, was guard against all sin,
Till on their flower of purity the hail
Of white man's curse came beating, blight-
ing in.

PRAYER

WHEN to your Savior you have prayed
All sorrows quickly fade,
As stone-set plant in scorching sun
Before the root 's begun.

For sorrow 's not akin to man,
Though met in every clan,
It is an incongruity
In souls that would be free.

In childish grief our mothers soothe,
When more mature we pray ;
How she the wrinkled cares would smooth,
Recall the smiles to play !

'T was mother dear who taught us prayer,
She too is now above.
How meet to seek for comfort there,
Drawn by a mother's love !

Perhaps we too will soon be there
To talk without a prayer ;
But still 't is sweetest sort of speech
That wisest tongues can teach.

THE OCEAN OF LIFE

THE midnight moon so clear and bright
 Withdrew his cheerful, welcome light
Behind a smothering fleecy cloud
That not one escaping ray allowed.

A shiver seemed to penetrate
 To Nature's heart, and all was cold,
As on a joyous summer fête
 When village funeral bell is tolled.

I saw an object in the tide
 And drifting slowly toward the shore;
Each sullen wave upon its side
 Pushed painfully toward the waiting shore.

As warrior 'gainst o'erwhelming force
 Slowly, reluctantly retreats;
One billow broken with a foaming course,
 But quick succeeding next defeats.

Sometimes a dash of silvery spray
 Shows white upon the gloomy wave,

As nature-sculptured salt display
When light is born to virgin cave.

By all-resistless mighty strength
The tide-tossed object lies at length
Upon the resting, strifeless strand,
To wonder why it was averse to land.

Upon life's ocean I am tossed
And drifting slowly toward the shore.
The years, life's waves, with will uncrossed
Waft me by their resistless war.

And why, then, should I struggle so
At leaving this dark, gloomy life?
Why not drift calmly with the flow
Toward place of peace from stormy strife?

Ah yes, if 't were not for the joys
That sometimes soothe the tiring noise,
The occasional dash of silvery spume
That brings relief in usual gloom!

Each new succeeding year propels
Me nearer to the bounding shore;
Each clearer than the last foretells
That soon I 'll tossing drift no more.

THE HAPPY DEAD

THE tomb said to the crumpled note
That lay beside its mossy mound,
Forsaken on the unrespecting ground,
Where dew-drops tinting on it wrote:

“Why hast thou those sad tears at dawn,
When all should wake refreshed with joy?
If thou wert I, thou trifling toy,
Thou 'dst have cause smiles for grief to pawn.

“I hold a mother loved and mourned,
And sorrowing children gather here,
Console each other, drawing near,
As mutual loss is felt and mourned.”

The note replied: “Beneath my fold,
In neat and pretty girlish script,
Lies greater grief than yours, O Crypt!
A heart, a living heart, but cold.

“A plea for life, with this reply
(And written to a school-girl friend,

She thought his heart thus more to rend),
'I 'll bother not his feigned tears dry.' "

The tomb grew thoughtful for a while:
"My dead rest peacefully with God;
Your writer soon with new love shod
Will with contempt on grieving smile.

"Your mourner knows no fellowship
To dry his tears at sight of theirs.
Mine pitying cannot make repairs,
Yours scorning will not mend the slip."

A breeze that had till now stood still
To listen to the sad note cite,
Came sighing through the trees, and light
Replying sighs the leafed tomb fill.

With thanks for pity, farewells said,
The note went hand in hand with breeze
Beneath the weeping willow trees,
And left the tomb with its happy dead.

UNLOVED

WITH spur of loneliness I strayed
To Nature's throne in a courtly glade
Where twining boughs gothic arches made,
To seek her thankful accolade
For faithful following through the year,
But even this glad seat was sere.

And destitute in this wide world
Of loving friends, aimlessly
I wandered far. My hopes all furled
And life a calm, no cheer for me,
No wind to waft me on my course,
And naught with wish of forward force.

Where hides that one that walked with
me ?
How oft we sat beneath that tree
And saw the squirrel seek the nut !
What, oak, and thou art grieving too !
Some forester has cruelly cut
The twining vines that lovèd you.

Unloved, what does thy strength avail?
The snow of sorrow, pain's sharp hail
Will prey upon your lonely heart,
 And unprotected by the love
So tender, yet of mighty art
 To cheer, how long wilt stand above?

Already you and I commence
To show the strain of grief so tense.
Our heads once so ambitious, proud,
By smiles uncheered are burden-bowed;
But grief is not the only frost we bear
Or blighting ban that we must wear;

'T is hard enough that Nature takes
What Nature nurtured, Nature makes.
Our hearts were not so pained if they
 So frail were faded by the frost;
That 's Nature's law. But borne away
 To trim another's home at our life's cost!

Their beauty lured some woodman's blade,
 Who placed them in a palace grand,
A prettier home than lonesome glade,
 Wrapped now at winter's stern demand
In sombre hues. With summer's bloom
Their yearning hearts may gain the wintry
 gloom.

Old oak, our strength amounts to naught;
'T is well the snows are eating fast
Into our hearts, and soon by work they
wrought

With all our strength we 'll lie at last.
The vines then penitent will grow,
But begging eyes but cumbent trunks will
show.

GEOLOGIC MAN

ALL men resemble geologic rocks:
As each upholds on earth his form
Each shows by life he leads his origin
And whether born mid flowers or in storm.

A sedimentary rock by settling sand
Is formed, and many men by gradual
growth
Gain wealth of wisdom. By slow study
stand
Above the world where those of quicker
growth
Like Bible's rootless plant ne'er rise so high.
The noblest character is ever formed
But step by step, and grain on grain is laid,
And hardened down by many tempests
stormed.

Organic rocks are made of mingled mites
That once were living forms. Some men
are made

Of efforts by another given. Each trait
Admired shows fossilled forms that cannot
fade,
Of his mother or a minister's strong stress.
Within each goodly deed we read a tale
Of those who jointly strove this soul to bless
And form a solid character that would not
fail.

And last, not least, are they who constitute
The igneous class of rock. They 're
formed by fire,
And under pressure are prepared, the root
Of life that 's destined to take station
higher
In after years. When danger oft we meet
We can more safely its known perils greet;
And man whose life has under fire been
formed
Knows best defense when by same foe he 's
stormed.

I LOVE HIM YET

ONCE more hath God thought best to
wound,
Again defeat my efforts crowned;
He does not hate though He has frowned;
My heart is set,
I love Him yet.

And if my sorrows steadily grow
I 'll try and make my groanings low,
That all my sufferings may not show,
Like Job be set;
And love Him yet.

O Lord! I thank Thee for this cross
And count as gain all earthly loss;
Thou sayest there 's gold for all this dross;
My heart is set,
I love Thee yet.

TO LOVE

TO love is like the picking of a rose,
Although unseen, perhaps, the thorn
is there;
Perhaps our soul will soon in sorrow's throes
Contend, that now pulsates in bliss.

And though the former perfume still remains
When many years have passed 'tween now
and then,
That can't atone for faithful thorn that pains
When memory's wind blows sweetly near
again.

To love is like the picking of a rose,
And after—lonesome is the stem and sad.
They say "Inanimate, can feel no woes,"
What do they say of me when I am sad?

"His heart is dead," they say where'er I go.
A dead thing throb and burn and pain me so?
A coal may sear e'en though it does not glow,
Ah little, oh how little do they know!

MY MOTHER

'T IS the sweetest word we know,
And it 's one we whisper low,
For it thrills through every heart
Its peace and rest to impart.

There are those who 've done great deeds
Of which one in wonder reads,
Women who seemed the world to please,
But my mother 's not like these ;

But her deeds are sung above
And she 's thought of but in love,
For she 's quiet and so sweet ;
If you could my mother meet !

ROMAN RELICS IN ENGLAND

BENEATH yon Druid altar shade we view
The wondrous works the invaders
wrought with toil;
Aye, conquerors, though their songs were
short indeed.

Those vantage-points in this barbaric soil,
The cultured strongholds, homes of victors
then,

Part winners then, part winners doomed
to stay;
In land where e'en the storms and winds
were men

To guard their almost virgin shore; the
way,
'Cept by the rumors merchant-strewn, un-
known.

And rocks and reefs formed potent navies
there,
Assailed the tortured ships; by Nature
thrown;

Discouragement was near, but brought
no fear.

226 Roman Relics in England

The bravery borne in righteous cause is
blest,

But bravery backed by tyranny is curst ;
And now these mighty walls are laid to rest ;
The forts that scorned the foe's attempt
to burst

Have ivy-conquered sunk to self-same state
'Fore Nature made them rock, but else
than war

Hath left its signa slumbering here :
For wicked luxury leaves in rock-formed
lore

A tale of times when pleasure was a trade ;
The massive baths whose grandeur e'en
now lives

To claim its comment just ; but man ne'er
made

The work that bore the buffets Nature
gives.

And now with powers that once prevailed
o'er all,

Whose mandates made the world in trem-
bling bow,

Its tools to harmless dust ignobly fall,

To garnish graves in effigy that hold
The nation named with every name but
"Good,"

And graced with every god but Christ.
The gold
And purple now are turned to green ; where
stood
The cohorts, crows and ravens wheel and
flank.
These works are books, the men the pages
old,
And long since closed, they lie upon their
rest,
Where many years have moulded o'er and
dressed
Them deep in dust. Unused though print
grows never dim.

FATHER

I 'VE mentioned father once before,
There 're those in weary world of ours
We like to linger with far more
Than we have hours.
This noble man is one to whom
Close study makes one closer cling;
The more we know the more we wish,
'Mong men a king.
His work to cure and comfort ills
And his delight do what God wills.
A pain seems light, our suffering 's still
As he steps o'er the sill.

A STONE FROM SOLOMON'S
TEMPLE

A FRAGMENT found by friends and
given to me,
That I with it as keystone build an arch
To span the stream that now is most a sea,
And block for moment brief Time's on-
ward march.

The co-essential fir and cedar fade,
And e'en the walls of your strong substance
made
Now lie in attitude of humble prayer,
From persecutions more than they could
bear.

The earth sailed seven times around the sun
While workmen wrought to rear your
stately walls,
But many, many times that seven she 's run
'Fore your completely conquered struc-
ture falls.

230 Stone from Solomon's Temple

In silence shaped, then doomed to under-
go

The siege of turbulent times and sadly
scarred

By desecrations all-unearned. And slow
Thy virgin purity was mournfully marred.

And now once more in sleeping silence
cloaked,

The changeful course of your long life re-
voked,

The death as peaceful, quiet as the birth,
For the longest trial of trouble's like a girth

And must possess two ends. Our soul
Departing on a new and unknown rôle,
With sorrow sick will soon resign the course
And seek the comfort, rest from former
source.

This stone may aid me build a Bridge of
Sighs

O'er which my thoughts, by memory pris-
oners held,

Now march with solemn step and downcast
eyes,

To mourn the once surpassing fane, now
felled.

Stone from Solomon's Temple 231

The wise and good king had me not in mind
When by his building-orders thou wert
mined,

But friends with whom I have a place in
heart

Have given this gem from history of art.

'T is not the cost or rarity we prize

In gifts, but halo cast by loving thought;
Our heart remembering kindness helps the
eyes

And speechless appreciation 's wrought.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A PIECE OF COAL

WHEN Nature made this world for man's
abode

She many, many modes of structure tried.
And each unsuited to our varied wants, she
strode

With dire destruction o'er her work; naught
did abide

But ruins of the former plan, which hid in fear
'Neath new-laid layers of earth, made map
of old so clear.

A feathery fern that flourished in a pretty vale
In time of Acrogenic Age, when flowers paid
By family fealty to the fern, stretched fronds
so frail

Appealed to Nature for its life. Now Nature
made

Her mind unwavering to change the present
plan,

And fern, though now a prince of plants,
felt self-same ban

That wrecked the poor Plebeian plants and
chance-grown weeds;
For Nature thought that she could make in
members modified
A fern of form very near the same, more
suited to our needs.
But Nature, although sometimes seeming,
is not cruel,
And felt compunction at the slaughter of
the ferns.
She carefully wrapped them in an e'er-
enduring case,
And mummies made. As Nature each suc-
ceeding spurns
That age assists to hide the frightened ferns.
Thus hunted long the fern, like a suspected
man
In abject terror starts at sound of each con-
demnèd plan.
Her disposition gradually changed from lov-
ing, tender, kind,
Till now a cold (coaled), hard character we find.
And what a change! From living beauty
bright to black
And dirty mass, inelegant, and dead. We
hack
As vandals these remains. 'T is even thus
with men

Reduced to misery in their sins, we never
think
That once they were not so. We, spurning,
deeper sink
In degradation's mire. Disease and death
and sin
We can o'ercome, but ne'er discouragement.
We win
Sometimes a perfect fern from out the black-
ened mass;
These fossils teach that darkest coat may
hold a heart,
That all is never without hope. When
people pass
Think on the tale of wrongèd fern. Play
not the part
Of covering, hiding him within his sins with-
drawn.
Ah, Nature, thou art strange but just!
Things live, then die;
We have an imitation of this spoken-plant
Will each succeeding era bring before His eye
A changing life till meet in form to dwell on
high?
No, blessed thought, "we" trivial types of
then forgotten age
Have been enrolled upon the Revelation-
promised page.

A NAME

WE often hear a name
Like one on Memory's page,
That prints the scene the same
As happed in younger age.

'T is but a name, but bears
To mind a lost, loved face;
One who that same name wears
That years cannot erase.

'T was but a name, but bound
By Memory's power it grows,
And each succeeding feeling 's drowned
As clearer visions rose.

We cannot e'er forget
The past, for Memory stays
When these known names are met
And sings of yesterdays.

VOICES

LIKE wood-dove calling to its mate
Just when the day is dying,
Resistless sounds that cannot wait
I hear the loved ones calling.

Sound softened by the distance great,
So far and yet so near me.
When eve sets forth her quiet state,
I hear the tones so dreamy.

The phantoms of a dream held fast
And wrapped in reality ;
Niobe-like to forms that last,
But tears mar not their beauty.

The voices of departed call
From favored place in glory,
And 't is not such a wide, wide wall
That separates them from me.

Call on, Oh voices soft and sweet,
Your hopeful yearned-for wooing,
For soon I 'll turn my weary feet
To where the saints are calling.

SONNETS



FRIENDSHIP

TO thee, love's younger sister, I would
sing,

To conquering charms acknowledgment
would bring.

A junior sister but in years, in grace
And strength superior may be. Thy face
When sweet with smiles makes life no
troubled task,

But darkened by a frown, unusual mask,
Remove thy retinue, the world grows drear,
The days are lonesome, long, each tick a
tear.

To soothe the soul of man thou 'st varied
forms:—

The friends we form 'mong creatures lower
scaled;

With Nature that with heredity conforms;
And man to man, would that it never
paled!

And last within thy graces glorified,
He, dearest Friend, who loving for us died.

We love to listen to a woodland bard
Whose songs, though sung in stifling city's
heat,

Transpose and blunt our senses trouble-
scarred,

And minds oft made extemporaneous feet
Lead to the restful shade at Nature's side;
Whose notes, though plaintive piped from
prison cell,

Speak us of Freedom in the forests wide.
Blest bird, trill on your lays that subtly tell
Our soul to cease its chafing, cheerfully
wait.

The squirrel that 's schooled in city way and
trait,

Around its model ferris-circle flies,
Delights and draws the laughter to our eyes.
Our forest friends are these, by common tie
Of Nature-kin and common home on high.

What one with smallest trace of human heart
That loves not Nature's quiet scenery,
The solitary spots in unaltered art
Of God? His only gardens yet unmarred?
Whose mossy mantled trees not cut or
charred

Have yet a semblance of a restful shade;
And oasis dear in desert man has made.

Friendship

24 I

If such is found, that being's not a man,
But offspring of a mad, misguided throng,
A member of the mirage-led caravan,
Forgetting Him who guides. The poet's
song

The sayings of a seer seek inspiration here.
'T is here that we can found friendship
supreme
With simple piety for common theme.

For friendship's law is some strong mutual
bond

Of sympathy, where she in sight of both
May discover all her charms. And by the
bond

Of natural history hath she linked my heart
To one who unknown hath inspired this
lay;

This tiny tribute work of my poor art,
A trial to lay materially a spray
Of laurel in his now all-woven crown.
But words are dew-drops 'fore the mind's
 great sun

And all my similes ashamed bow down
Before my love untold. O honored one,
I pardon pray, but with me sings the choir
Of Nature's children, lovers all of thee,
And I, like them, sing for a word from thee!

Thou traveller, whose untiring foot is strange
To scarce a strand, and named in native land
With love, respect, might I my standing
change

And call thee friend? Except because my
mind

Is oft with thee? In fame the difference
seems

To make me as an Afric sprite, first known
By thee. And yet because her reserved
beams

Shine not for me, shall you from much-
sought throne

Of friendship banish me? Aside from spur
Of golden glory thou 'st an accolade
Of personal virtue that would win thee
"Sir."

Unsheathe your sword of Truth, that polished
blade

Unsoiled by rust, and thou, O Nature's
knight,

Receive me in your train at your side to fight.

Thou Savior, Prince of Peace, and Wonder-
ful,

The nearest name we give thee, Lord, is
Friend;

The One who raging storms of soul can lull,

And loved advice in troubled times can lend ;
 Who shares the burdens of a weary life,
 Stands at my side where sounds the thickest
 strife.

'T is here that Friendship, trained by loving
 man,

All glorified like Launfal's leper stands
 And, bathed in pure celestial light, from man
 A sweeter, more consistent life demands.
 And God, as doth the earthly friendship,
 asks

But love given in return for love. Make me,
 O Lord, to work within our mutual tasks,
 A better and a fitter friend to Thee.

FUTURITY

I OFT withdraw apart from noisy world
To reap the joys reflection-sown; to
 earled
Estate in Nature's realm, the place where
 peace
In only kingdom dwells; there noises cease,
There chaos is unknown. Since knight by
 love
And work, no beauty from mine eyes is hid.
These moments bathed in bliss like that
 above;
At sunset wonder what is buried 'mid
Those golden bars, what beams my life to
 light
In future time. Those yellow bands so
 bright
Are signs of joy; what means the mingling
 red?
Those clouds so often drown the happy
 dyes.
My hopes increased or lost as fear is fed,
Thus drawn by silent language of the skies.

Beyond to-morrow's fate, if that 's foretold,
What then? The farther side of those bright
bars

What sort of scene lies lost to visions, cold
And weak from straining toward the future
time?

And must I stroll 'long Stygian banks, a
shade?

Or what is worse, come back, the theories
made,

To haunt the homes we pretence made to
leave?

Ah no! There is a country far more fair
Than human minds conception could re-
ceive.

And Death 's the dense and thorny path, a
lair

Of beasts that, formed by fear, guard well
the way;

In a prairie lies this path; that prairie's
Life.

The rest that terminates the working-day
Must come after desert drear and path of
strife.

The evening church-bells call me from my
dreams,

But like the ocean when its storm is past,

The billows angry break though gale is gone ;
The action 's ceased though substances long
last.

The light of sunset shows beyond the brake ;
The path of death grows dim. My task to-
day :—

To fit me for that final fight, forsake
The thought of fears. The lode-stone of my
way

Is mental sight of city in the sky,
Where mansions past the power of mortal
eye

Our God has gone to seek. I 'm ne'er so
lost

In this world's work, where one 's confusing
tossed

From care to care, as to forget these hours
That, lived apart, taste of futurity.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY

THOU sacred burial-urn given to the
famed,

What world-known men could in thy vaults
be named!

An air of awe fills soul with graver thought
than wont

When steeped in thy silence all sublime;

Unbroken 'cept by desecrating taunt

Of noisy feet that strike in poorest rhyme

Upon thy hollow-sounding, well-worn stones,

Subtending cells that seal immortal souls.

Beneath thy dome great men made greater
scenes,

Here men were crowned as kings in former
day,

Now, now they all are senseless, worthless
clay.

Thou tellest in trembling tones and daily toll

That fame of Heaven not fame of earth 's our
goal.

CHILDREN

O H, how I love the darling little ones,
The only hearts of honor, souls of
truth!

In this light-lacking world, light-bearing suns
That hold the drear discouragment aloof.

When quiet evening brings the hour of rest
We gather round the hearth to hear their
song

With artless non-dissembled wisdom blessed;
We smile encouragement, listen hours long.
The witty ways they have describing things
And emphasize with gestures more than
sweet;

Or struggling to our laps, long talk to us,
Though truly nothing 's said, they 're so
discreet,

They mean so much. My thought can't
form in art,

But prayers for little folk e'er fill my heart.

WOMAN

I WAS about to ask what woman is,
Then I thought of mother dear and love
lisped out

A definition which words can't write.

"Within her tongue the law of kindness lies,"
Says Holy Book. This law with loving light
Makes world a brighter sphere to our tired
eyes;

Her smile illumines our souls and clearer skies
Of character thus formed before us rise.

Her careful touch in trimming blessed nooks
Makes paradise from places once so drear.

To her for help when tired we turn our looks,
She points to Him and helps to bring us
near.

The woman of this world its ways makes
bright,

Without, poor man could find no leading
light.

MILTON

EARTH moans a monody, for Earth hath
lost

The master minds that sang her songs
sublime.

O mighty Muse, would I on sorrow's frost
Could trace with my too bashful finger
rhyme

To lay the suited laurel at their feet!

I seek in every known poetic clime,

I search through Nature's scrolls, a tribute
meet;

Along the shore I stroll in tempest time,
And view the weeded wrecks, sea-books,
with awe;

To learn if Lycidas still lies enchained

By jealous Neptune's wrath. I nearer draw

To thee, who mourn'st a friend on briny
bier,

While standing where the ocean's salty
tear,

Sobs to me of those *I've* laid on self-same
bier.

The sage cathedrals crowned with pious
 awes,
With ivy-labelled learned walls, outlaws
Of frivolous world for Puritanic faith;
Here too at Inspiration's sacred shrine
I seek the virgin vows, untainted, pure.
Once more that organ solemn and divine,
So deified by thy deathless rhymèd crown,
Reluctant tunes its lofty themes for one
Like me, but vain and groundless fear, a pun,
To think that I could grasp, engrave, such
 notes.

I strain to catch the melody that floats
Like thirsting Tantalus' tide, comes but to
 hide
Itself from reach. Thus Munin, muse of
 memory,
Deigns not give me one worthy word for
 thee.

By Nature, whom you loved and knowing
 read
So well, thy praises are most sweetly said.
The tide with touch well suited to a lute
Strikes masques from sedges near the shore;
The wind, grown tender in the west, finds flute
In reeds, the Pandean-pipes of Nature's
 corps,

To play the pastoral part so loved by thee.
But Tacita, of silence god, dark frowns
On me, the only voiceless Reed; from me
Withholds the telling of my debt unpaid.
Unchecked by turbulous times that laid
Distracting hands on thee, and *I* still mute!
You helped to move the tide that Cromwell
made,
But still had time to find Fame's modest lute.

As swimmer, in a tiring tide, seeks rest
By ceasing efforts, floats, so thou didst wrest
From pressing cares a time to commune
With holier themes than those that furnished
tune
For broken march thy century cared to tread.
And last so tired of ceaseless strife thy soul
Refused to share the light that chideless shed
Its beams upon chaotic scenes; then stole,
Though of the world, to thoughts that dwell
beyond:
With rhymèd feet, left prints on sands of
time
That we may follow and *regain*, if lost,
The path that leads to *paradise*. Sublime
The life that ceases not with death, but
reigns
Above, and for our sake here too remains.

FAREWELL

WHEN parting 's near, and farewells
must be said

The tongue is still, 't is time the heart must
hum.

The mouth is full of words by feeling fed,
But speech, as stage-struck, fails the hour,
is dumb.

I now depart in Science's sake to seek
In foreign fields what Nature may have
stored.

A farewell floats on every bay, and brook,
and creek,

I love them well, and know each sanded
ford.

I know the tread of tides that tireless go
And come. Now ripples on the brooks
seem timed

And sob their tunes in measures set and
slow.

The saddened reeds to breeze obeisance
bow,

And he so kind, though kingly powered,
with rhymed
Though mournful voice replies,—“ We lose
a friend, farewell.”

The woods, so wrapped in silence that my
ears
Seem filled with deafening sound, produced
by thoughts
That throb, expression seek. It may be
years
Before again I wander through these woods.
The willows, weeping, whisper to the wind,
The laurel lisps an “Au Revoir” of love;
“Auf Wiedersehen” ’s by the hemlock
signed,
That stoic of the wood. The clouds above
Compete with earth to form the richest view;
And this I soon must leave for other climes.
Where muses may thereon more beauty
strew;
But things we know and love are wrapped in
rhymes
That strangers do not have; this is the
theme,
The rhythm that makes life a tranquil stream.

WHAT A POEM IS

SONATAS of the *bulbul* merged in stone,
Composed, and after statued, bathed
in tears

Niobe-like. Each line a fibre flown
From Circe's mantle; smile-dissembled jeers;
A superficial jest in world of woe
By one who sneers because once thought it
so.

False fetters carved by poets from the gold
Of Past, that ingot-burdened ship deep sunk
In sea of Now, that loosen when they 're
told.

The tender thread that leads material man
From labyrinth, with present cares when
drunk,
To spirit happiness where he once ran.

FICKLE GOLD

I GAZED upon the ocean's golden strand
And thought,—how like my sweetheart's
hair that sand.

And lo! E'en as I watched each wave that
came

Caressed it lovingly, yet drew no blame!

And in the field near-by each flower upheld
Its yellow tresses for each bee to kiss;
Each golden sunbeam first for that, then
this,

Had glances sweet, from none were they
withheld.

I sadly turned away and hastened home,
But confident and boastful that my Love
Allowed her true affections ne'er to roam.

Alas, my gold, like wreck-strewn ingot-ore,
Inviting strangers beckoning above,
Lay strewn upon the smiles of coral floor!

A GLIMPSE OF PARADISE BUT
BREEDS DESIRE

“ ONE kiss, my Love, before I sail away
Where I shall see no love for many
a day.”

She was demure, reluctantly she gave,
But 'gainst a lover's bid what wish can save?

'T was many years before he sought his own,
But found her lips were not for him alone ;
Ah worse, were mart for loveless kisses too,
And yet he knew not whence this coldness
grew.

While wandering disconsolate along
He met a sage who stopped and heard his
wrong :

“ 'T was bad that kiss of long ago to sue ;

If once a bee to knowledge kiss a flower,
Unless he soon return to claim his dower
The wish can't wait, another gets his due.”

“THE SPARROW”

(Theme : The French for “the sparrow”, *le moineau*, being of two roots, literally meaning “little monk”—so named from his gray jacket.)

O MIDGET monk of sylvan monastery,
Thou gray-gowned friar, e'er breathing
benisons
O'er rosary beads that dew hangs o'er the
tree,
Sing, sing to me! And severing secret's
string
Repeat confessions that the leaves confide;
We'll then compare and know if these and
those
By insects chirped do ever coincide.
Sequestered from this sphere of sin and woes,
In heaven's free air polluted, poisoned not,
Sing, sing and lift my soul to paths you
tread;
Make, make my life as thine sublimest sign,
Of virgin purity. And let my life e'er be
As it has been; let naught seduce e'er me
Where long I've trod together with my
God.

YESTERDAY AND TO-MORROW

THE driving-wheels of time, together
joined

By unromantic link "To-day,"—they roll
Unceasing on their backward course for
aye

But ne'er reverse respective place. I fly
To former one to shape my simple rhyme;
Two tales are told by past and future time;
The one is marked with many sorrowed
prints,

The other bright with golden dreams. But
since

'T is human law to seek what brings most
pain,

To dwell on deeds that mark the saddest
year,

Our songs, our thoughts, are mostly turned
again

To past that from its weary toils repose
Hath won, but does not gain. Then, here
and there

Joys show that far outshine to-morrow's.

260 Yesterday and To-Morrow

That repetition now deny ; devoid
Of faces so familiar to our hearts,
Thus in the joys that mark to-day a void is
left.

We long to stay the wheels of time,
To start them o'er a more consistent course,
For in the sweetness of the past the rhyme
Is sometimes marred. From chances, long
lost, learn

What 's not but might have been. We
scarce endorse

All parts we played in past ; but looking,
turn

To memory's mirror, live once more the day
When Christ commander of our lives we
chose,—

And now as earthly day draws to a close,
The only deed we do not e'er regret,
The only light in day whose sun is set.

How oft we long to stay Time's endless
chain,

A retrospect to gain ; for morrows come
Are made to-days ! We, wandering down
Life's lane,

Behold the future just ahead, like some
Our walks on common roads when some
slow stage

Yesterday and To-Morrow 261

Goes laboring just in front, nor leaves nor
nears.

Time grows not tired; not so 't is with our
years;

Soon all will be as yesterdays on earth;

We 'll slip the link that binds, to-morrow
gain,

And live with Time an endless life. The
worth

Of Now we count but naught compared with
Then.

We could not place our shoulders to the
wheel

If we had not this goal in view. Our work
To-day is but to long and toward to-morrow
steal.

WALES

ROUGH land of rocks, I love thy mountain homes,

Where one can feel the freedom in the air.

Give me thy simple, sturdy countrymen!

I wandered where I would, a home was there;

And in thy wilds, from house and town
away,

There danger lurks, but how those times
loved I!

The stirring spirit moves me to this day.

Those times! We laughed at life and challenge cry

To death. We nothing feared, 't is of the
land.

Within thy cliff-formed walls, but wildness
dwells;

The hardy hawk and gull are oft alone,

For days the only sight of life, the cells

Wave-worried from the cliffs the only bed.

I found your solitude with fear ne'er wed.

FRANCE

THOU flowered land, my fancy sings to me
Of thee on pleasure bent. You may
be right;
Some think this world a playground built
for man,
Some think not so. But viewed in Beauty's
light,
Thou, closely copied Daphne of our day,
Art scion of all that touches minds of art.
Thou once held school throughout the earth,
to teach
Thine unmatched laws of loveliness. Nor
wrapped
Within thyself, to ends of earth dost reach
The cultured customs, from which our ways
are mapped.
Thou 'rt more like maid of fifteen summers,
age
Than like the thoughtful, action-weighting
sage;
Spends time admiring features fair to shirk
The plain but stronger needs of household
work.

LIFE

DEAR Lord, who gavest and will take
away,
A pure life I have tried to live with Thee;
Grateful, what though not joy hath held full
sway,
Thou gavest that satisfies and comforts me.
A life that 's tinged with sadness sounds
more sweet:
The blocks of marble purest white ne'er
meet
Our fancy like the ones with faint drawn
lines
Of blue and red. "Then what is life?" we
hear,
"A wait for death"? Ah no! These sad
confines
Are just to prove, not what we seem, but are.
But 't is a wait for death and life beyond;
We wait the Heavenly Usher's admitting
wand.
A life reserved, unknown, with saddened
tone,
Can be more good than one in joy and
known.

DANTE

WHERE has the world an architect of
rhyme

More careful in his measurements and time?

We read, and before our admiring mind

Each story grows, each sculptured arch defined,

The templed themes sublime cathedrals rise.

But admiration 's not confined to size,

For art-embroidered skilfully on these walls

Of thought, the massive Norman Style in
verse,

Nice arabesque in pleasant contrast falls,

And lessons oft so dissonant and terse

Escape in music from these walls; sublime

As from cathedral choirs are they. Words
climb

By aid of his pen, and peerless form in art,

Like church-mosais, pictured texts impart.

BOTANY

TO O. M. E.

'T IS not to know the tongue-entangling
terms,
To learn from lexicon the Latin class and
name;
The books can't tell how rootlets work and
worm
To wend their way to weeds and flowers.
The same
Cannot explain as can our eyes, how leaves
From fairy Chlorophyll they gain a gown
And steal with modest bashfulness like
thieves
Into the light; and startled by the glare
Of earth, then slower form the flowers fair.
My too prosaic pen can't paint aright
The happy hours, not bending o'er a book,
But strolling through the natural gardens
bright,
The woods where beauty nestles in each
nook,
Where flowers flash in heaven-born hues be-
dight.

MELANCHOLY

THAT I am melancholy, say not so,
Because my mind to meditation tends,
Because I 'm no participant in show
And folly that half the world's sky subtends.
Grave meditation knows no kin to grief,
The weeping sage was given to meditate,
But converses are n't always true. Belief
That cloaks all thought in moody sable gown
Is far unworthy of enlightened times.
That noble face, though furrowed with a
frown,
The tutelary tunic that defends
'Gainst gay temptation's taint, with sightless
eyes
That yearned to see their master's prodigy,
Our greatest song, who calls morose he lies.
If themes like these made mighty Milton
grave,
Though could not cloud his hopeful, cheer-
ful mien,
These reachless, lofty topics that I crave

And count me wise if I can rightly glean
But coarsest chaff from golden grains of
fame,

Can these sit lightly on my laboring brow?
The sombre suit of lark holds happiest soul,
Whose lowliness forbids the usual bough,
Yet in solitude of dawning day he stole
His entire being gave its homage meet
To Him who bids us pray in quietness.
The inner being can have sweetest peace
Beneath the soberest garb; the dear caress
Of God is lost when thoughtful communes
cease.

THE ANT

THOU tiny, tireless toiler of the earth,
For one iota of that patience blest
I pray. The will to do a work is worth
A doubled power to finish it. The rest
He takes is sweeter in repose aware
The work to-day is done; to-morrow's task
Is never burdened with the harrowing care
Of uncompleted yesterdays. I 'd ask,
But thoughts divided are, whether the ant
Is sensible to sound, the secret strange
That hides the natural bent and binds his
heart
Within his work,—a hundred times de-
stroyed,
But ever ready he anew to start,
Though thwarted oft and oft, he's ne'er an-
noyed.

MY BOOKS

THOSE nooks where man inspired by
Nature lays
His notes from her ; those imitation worlds
Where Nature checked in natural course de-
lays,
Presents each varied phase for study's sake.
Devoid of usual rapid change, provide
For leisure lessons, thus more certain make.
The stage where men of centuries else for-
got,
The drops to form the tide, that eddying
churns
And ceaseless sweeps exhausted centuries
'way,
React their lives. The school wherein one
learns
Mistakes that men have made, to light the
way
And show the stones whereon our feet would
dash ;
The thoughts transferred from God to each
man's mind,
Apostles in disguise ; knowledge refined.

SOLITUDE

AT timed intervals, 't is right that man
Should leave degenerating noisy clan,
Whose actions, thoughts, and words are
surface-sown,
And can endure but little stress when grown ;
To hold commune with promptings of the
soul,
Not 'neath Misanthropy's disgraceful flag,
No thinker sane can serve that sieve-like rag,
Insignia of deserters from the rank
Of Meditation's school. On some lone bank
To sit and in abeyance hold the tide
Of swirling, rushing life, and stay it still
While trying to smoothe out its wrinkled
side
And make it more a peaceful, stormless rill ;
To learn from thine own self alone His will.

BEN NEVIS, SCOTLAND

WHEN Mother Nature planned and made
this sphere
She fashioned parts to love of art appeal;
She formed those parts which by sublimest
fear
Strike senses dumb, by awful grandeur
shown.
Deep down within the earth where thou wert
born
There Nature ground and fused thy granite
heart;
When thou wert done 't was like a chick
unborn
Within the egg. Then Nature gave a start,
Affrighted shook herself, and crumbling
crust
Up through her surface-shell thee towering
thrust.
A glorious book, Geology, thou art,
To hold such gems as Nevis is. By thee
My thought was led in joy to Nature's
heart,
May many more be helped as thou helped
me!

MY JONATHAN

A^T Water-Witch a dear home nestles there,
Near hidden by those Nature-gardened
hills
All green, while chorused round that home-
stead fair
The thrush and bobolink contest the rills.
There in that scene that nestles near to God
A friend resides,—a friend in strongest
sense,
In dearest sense, the world hath cognizance.
How oft those forest aisles with him I've
trod,
In Moses' altar of the wilderness;
And from the sermons there in simple stress,
We wandered hand in hand to altar-rail
Within the Church of God! And what avail
That noble character upon my ways,
How often near the fallen to cheer and raise!

THE FARMER

THOU simple soul, my model of a man,
In careful scale of life does Nature
place

Thee lower for lack of linguistry? Or can
Thy scorn of raiment rich discount thy race,
Ungilded with adornments much in use,
That worse than worthless are? So simple
art

Thou that no sooner born of brain than told,
No need to act a part condemned by heart.
Unlearned except in lore the fields unfold
The sweet phenomena of God. Indeed
The Lord speaks oft of farmers in His Law;
The lessons indirectly taught we read
From similes there drawn from out the soil.
Blest be thy simple upward-tending toil.

THE WISTARIA

WOUND round the trunk that scarce in-
vites it there,

But 'chanted by ambrosial charms that snare ;
It snake-like nestles in the coils subdued,
Clings lavender-coned Wistaria honey-
dewed.

And bees so surfeit with the sweet by score
Drop Roman-fête-like down ; or as Hessian
corps,

Enraptured by the feast, unfrightened fall
At those so artful winged foes' charge call.
While thousands sense-sunk in the perfumed
air

That virtued steals e'en our stoic minds
Go humming pæans o'er the cup, aware
Not that the sweet, in smallest tastes, but
blinds

The bitter held in all intemperate draughts.
It satiates e'en spring, these Wistaria wafts.

MY MOODS

DISCOURAGEMENT

PASS from me, mournful mood, must I
endure
The pangs of pain, that memory fills my
mind!
Those solemn, awful somethings that im-
mure
My soul in sadness, and so tightly bind
All hope, though she stands knocking at my
heart,
My mind, so wrapped in Sadness' walls,
can't hear.
Creation seems to mock, and maddening
dart
A cynic's sneer, as all-triumphant Fear
Possession takes and holds me in her grasp.
'T is now that life is harder borne than
death.
The falling Hope looks round for aught to
clasp;
Discouragement with laugh, all demon-like,

Thrusts taunting back the pleading hands of
Hope;
She too by law of environment must mope.

CYNICISM

What now, another force my faith attacks!
The mind, in fear, within itself contracts,
And objects viewed with less capacity
Appeal less strong. The eyes now pitying
see
(They 're servants of the mind) the work of
man,
Forever forging but to make his coffin-plate,
The serious looks, while striving hard,
And still there 's nothing done; he feeds but
Fate;
All this makes music to my mirth.
Diogenes, the wisest of the wise,
Was drawn disciple of this faith, the worth
Of man's endeavors taught as naught.
These moods that mar our life us servants
make!



FROM THE KETTLE
ON THE CRANE



FROM THE KETTLE ON THE CRANE

WHEN the chill of December invades
every nook,
When the dusk of the twilight taboos every
book,
Round the open fireplace that contains half
the room,
Shedding sunset-like glow through the
deepening gloom,
Comes the family confidingly gathering near,
Like the idle but still weary cattle appear
At the home-bar of rest when the sun gilds
the west.
Enlightening the hour with song or with tale,
Inspiring the big, but the little folks quail
At the stories of war that the grand'ther
recalls
As he hears cannonading from the fireplace's
walls;
Or after the youngsters are all tucked away
And the council consists but of heads old
and gray,

282 The Kettle on the Crane

Then the quiet ensues, each his own thought
construes.

Then the fire as an oracle greedily is sought,
And each ember reminds of some scene that
has passed ;

To our minds how these memories come
trooping so fast !

From the kettle crane-hung charms are brew-
ing for me,

But unlike Macbeth's omens from weird
sisters three,

I can spell but of Past, future dreams now
but flee,

Like the mists that are made by the caldron
I see

But to vanish in air. While it 's brewing it
sings

Like the bubbling chuckle of hillside springs
Or the purling of meadow-brooks o'er mossy
rocks,

And their cool tempting fords with the calm
wading flocks,

And the farm where our childhood grew
weary with rest ;

Bubbling over with dreams that were yearn-
ing to live,

In their reaching forgot what for them was
the best.

The Kettle on the Crane 283

So the seething contents of the kettle o'er-
flow

Like a cascade or geyser that gurgling give
Flecks of foam to the o'erhanging clouds but
to die

With a sputter upon the fire, as those dreams
Like the moths in our warm, youthful energy
fly

But to singe their frail wings in the soberer
beams

Of maturity wise. Oh, the witchery con-
tained

In the caldron that hangs on the rusty old
crane!

And what songs it can sing to the present-
tired brain

That call on this sorcerer for potions to lure
From the past a loved look, or a philter,
allure

Responsive smiles from the stern cynic Now.
With the dusk of the twilight we worship-
fully bow

At the altar to try and forget every pain
In the charms that are cast by the witch of
the crane.

WHEN PUSSY PURRS

THERE somehow seems to come a chance
When life takes time to rest
And grants o'er long gone years a glance,
All peace, but now unrest.
There seems to float through memory's door,
Now open wide, a sound
Of humming bees replenishing their store,
Fly our Wistaria round;
The hum 's akin to that which stirs
When pussy purrs.

And somehow too methinks I see a fire
And mother bending o'er,
While close beside the warm grate fire
A kitten's bubbling snore,
And from the kettle hanging by
Niagara-like there 's mist
O'er spout, from whence sometimes the
waters fly,
Fall back when fire hath kissed,
And deep within the kettle stirs
Like pussy's purrs.

When Pussy Purrs

285

And whirring like a gramophone
In prelude to a song,
The kitten seems to be alone,
In tunes to past belong,
The sweetest bard of memory;
And thoughts of yesterdays
From record of the mind go humming free,
No other music plays
As oft at eventide occurs
When pussy purrs.

THE PHONOGRAPH

I HEARD a tale not very long ago
Of dryads living in the trees
Who sang when wakened by the sunset glow
A lay that rivalled softest breeze.

To free this sweetest captive fairy-maid
One must a magic key turn round ;
This key was almost sunken in the shade
Upon the bark and near the ground.

But he who pitied most would seek the
most
To find solution of this song.
The happy sprite then would reward her
host
Ten added years of life and song.

A learned and a loved countryman
With ear of genius heard a song ;
Along mechanic's forte his fingers ran,
Inspired, unwearied, ran along.

The Phonograph 287

The chord he found, sometimes he lost the
chord.

But tireless searched the whole scale
through,
And last in modest niche he found the sword
To cut the gordian knot in two.

He chained the humming-gamut of the bees
And added key-board from the trees,
Then formed his key from product of the
mines,
The joyous dryad he unbinds.

Not ten years but eternity was given,
Not years but what is more, 't was fame,
And listening to the unchained song he 's
given
Applauding world bequeaths undying
name.

AN OLD MAN'S MUSINGS

'T IS growing late, the night is near,
I think of this without a tear,
Things are so changed all, all is new,
I turn to point to loved ones that and this,
But hear no word replied. Ah true,
The loving looks of those I miss!
For all are long since gone, are gone.
I silent wait for night's release
And then reunion at the Dawn,
This sorrow leave for perfect peace.

Around the rooms are ranged the books
And nicnacs memory filled. I read
From pages of the past these nooks
From hands so dear now gone indeed
Took existence sweet. The things once
bright
Are pregnant with the past, but worn
And faded e'en as I. My sight
Is dim and weak, but sense is born
To hear from heart the tales now told
Of times and those I loved of old.

An Old Man's Musings 289

'T is growing late, the night is near,
My race is almost, almost run.
I think of this without a tear;
The start was sure 't was well begun,
The finish holds no haunting fear;
Through all this life the Lord was ever near.
The loved ones all are gone, are gone;
I silent wait for night's release
And then reunion at the Dawn,
This sorrow leave for perfect peace.

MY ENLISTING

I LIKE the fireside battle-field,
To see the fireplace forces wield
Their strength against contending cold,
That howling tells the strokes have told.

From down beneath the logs I hear
In volley and in single tone
Defending shots that charm the ear,
And say the hearth still holds its own.

The firing 's ceased, the fight abates,
The rich red embers mark its close,
As on a field the sun retreats,
Ashamed of red on tinged white rose.

Then we around in bivouac sit,
The bivouac of the home, to muse
Upon the battles of the day,
To-morrow's encouragement infuse.

THE FAMILY CLOCK

THOUGH the clock hath struck the hours,
With a warning sharp and clear,
I cannot resist the powers
Of the spirits ling'ring near.

'Cross the threshold, treading softly,
With a grave-born fear of sound,
From the past they come to greet me,
And silently throng around.

The call of the clock sonorous
Recalls these my visitors away,
And the twelfth of the notes in chorus
Adds the wraith of dead To-day.

With a sense of chastening sadness
Every eve the ticks I tell,
That ring in the awesome stillness
Like the strokes of a funeral bell;

Or the strokes on the smithy anvil
Welding bands with fire and blow,
Beating down with pain and sorrow
To-day's deeds that now must go;

That must go as the silver hammer
Goes ticking the last nails down;
But the flow'rs of memory I gather
Despite their menacing frown.

Like the sound of builders' sledges,
As the ring on rivet and bolt,
Tiny ticks on the great bark's edges,
Making strong for future jolt.

As the click of cavalry hoof-beats
Leave the known for stranger streets,
From yesterday each new second weans
And prepares for us new scenes.

Like the wearied work of highhole
Tapping, toiling for its bread;
And the message quickens dormant soul
And ambition nearly dead.

Soon for me will strike no hours
But the twelfth-stroke of my life,
And I, like the faded flowers,
Will pass into spirit life;

Will pass like the faintest echo
Unheard by the busy crowd,
As the sounds of a single second go
When another begins to crowd.

WAIT

THERE 'RE thousand souls that pendant
hang
On syllable sad though brief,
So sad yet sweet it hopefully rang
Like mist-chimes' blest relief,
Its tidings dear to sailor's ear
When harbor's hidden guide rings,
Myth-siren-like leading sings.

How many hearts expectant, grave,
One more farewell hope crave,
Have heard that glad but tristful tone
That as the years roll by
An all-aspiring goal has grown,
That stifles many a sigh
And conquers many a cry!

Two hearths whose fires that word disjoins,
Though intermingled grown,
The sweet society purloins,
They now must burn alone;
But unquenched fire of love

Still smoulders through the years;
All unrelieved by tears.

Upon the sweetest flower, the rose,
The sharpest thorn-sting grows,
And "Wait " in all its loveliness
A hidden pang still holds,
For fear the rose which it enfolds
Will fade, unfaithful be,
When absence makes it free.

So short and yet so long, so long,
The waited days are doubly long,
But still like mariners' guiding-star
It beams so bright and far.
A word of hope oft makes man great,
Controls, directs his fate.
Results grow brighter as we wait.

READING

READING is a siesta sweet,
A calm and restful sleep,
And Morpheus' recreation seat,
Where rue can never creep;
A fairy fane where woe 's forgot,
A hermit's peaceful grot.

'T is here the filmy firmament
Where dreams and fancies roam,
The tales of light fantastic bent,
Or deep and dusty tome
That with impressive awe imparts
The Eastern subtile arts.

A paradise that kind conforms
To mood that reigns the hour;
Inciting tale of war that warms
And strengthens manhood's power,
Or lays of love that sweetly give
The reason why we live.

The garden where cute wisdom grows,
Such that entwined with rose,
The learned ivy unseen works
Its intellectual spell.
Upon each page a life-thought lurks,
As some one rose or fell.

TWILIGHT ON THE FARM

MY library window looks with awe
O'er cornfield frost-made brown and
bare;

Nature beauty-shorn tries to withdraw
In shame to concealing shadows' care;
But merciless day, still lingering near,
Illumes the trees and scattered stalks
Of corn, still standing without fear,
The silent sentinels whose walks
Are confined to swaying with the wind.

The dawn and twilight pale, the birth
And death of day, twin brothers are;
The same gray light enshrouds the earth,
Things look as dim as though viewed afar.
Both scenes are restfully subdued
In sound, in color, and effect;
The mind revolts at aught that 's rough or
rude,
As oft the thunder storms affect,
And seeks the restful solitude.

298 Twilight on the Farm

Within the room the stove with regret
Soft glows from out the corner dark,
At last few seconds of sunset.
My books try hard to hide themselves
Behind the undeceiving glass,
And Cæsar's cast, though built of brass,
Seems leagued with life and leaning looks
As though intent to speak. The side door
 makes
A dark abyss, Cimmerian gates.

But through the double doors a view
In cheerful contrast to sombre hue
Of my dark den. There grandma dear
By candle-light, compared so near
To lack of light shines as a sun,
Prepares the evening meal. In fun
Her tresses twist themselves to curls
And nestle round her neck like some young
 girl's,
Though snow stays fast from storms of past.

When trouble brings a twilight time,
Casts shapeful shadows on life's scene,
When e'en my books almost divine
Too fail to interest me, when green
And smiling nature looks so brown and
 sad

As on that twilight eve, I turn
To cheerful thoughts of when a lad.
Encouragements from candle burn
Whose image 's cast by mirroring Past.

WHY?

ALONE I sat in study just at eve,
My mind on missionary work was bent,
And saddened thoughts surged on, nor
would they leave,
Till God a missionary sent.
I heard a sound, a stranger's step, unknown;
I 'd asked that I remain alone.
But somehow thoughts would come and
work would go,
Thus this intrusion welcomed so.

"Please buy some lace, good sir," I heard
her say,
A tiny tot scarce eight, looked more.
"It 's some I knit myself, sir, yesterday."
'T was such a pleading look she wore.
"Come here, you little one, sit down by me,
I 'll try a missionary be."
She came and took my hand in sweet sur-
prise,
An eager light shone in her eyes.

“I ’ve always wished to meet a mission-man,
 Something strange I can’t understand:
 What makes them go away to a far-off
 land?”

A tear unseen fell on my hand.

“They take them things to eat, but I am
 hungry too,
 And mother ’s sick,—no food to eat,—
 And Brother Bill,—he died last night,—was
 too.

Why don’t they bring us bread and meat?”

These simple words to me a lesson taught;
 The little one inside I brought,
 She would not eat, but wished it home to
 take,

“So mother ’d eat and soon get well.”
 And this I did for my dear mother’s sake;
 And yet still more I did as well,
 I took her home, played mission “just for
 fun.”

Pray same case what would you have done?

Oft in my study, by the firelight’s glow,
 Memory recalls that scene of long ago,
 And oft the simple question “Why ” comes
 back,
 But all the answers reasoning lack,

We 've mission work at home, but misery 's
still around,

There 's much that 's done, there 's much to
do.

What I 'd commenced I 'd try to carry
through,

Before I 'd seek new working ground.

IGNORANT EMIGRATION

I SILENT stood on Swansea's dock
And saw what I in words can't find,
So sad a scene that pathos paints
Its image on my mind.
A state by ship was soon to sail
For far Australia's land,
And now with sorrow's sob and wail
The voyagers flock the strand.

Now they sail through zone of sorrow
That 's e'er attendant when we part.
Now too late they dream of morrow;
Higher nature given sway
Brings clearer intellectual light
On dreams of yesterday.
They see the scheme with reasoning slight
By whose false flame they came.

The signal 's given, the crowd embark,
The smaller sails are set, she steers
From land soon left but harder gained.
Alone I sat in tears;

And mournful musings thronged my mind;
 I seemed to see the waves
Form from the ripples of the wind
 This people's future life.

They sailed a sea-sick stricken crew
In close-cramped quarters stowed, and knew
No light nor air for nearly half a year.
Their dreamings once so dear
They now long since had disappeared;
 'T was only trouble seen
In land which now they quickly neared,
 Not what it might have been.

JOTS FOR LITTLE TOTS



BABYLAND

COME dear, let 's take a stroll,
Yes, hand in hand,
Your tiny fingers lead
To Babyland.

I 'd throw off all these years
To live with thee,
And leave the work and cares
That trouble me.

And then in silent songs
We 'd give Him praise,
With birdies teaching us
To tune our lays.

Oh, would n't we romp and run
While she smiled sweet,
The mother, dearest one,
Helps guide our feet !

I 'd pull poor kitty's tail
The same as you ;

I think it must be fun
Sweetheart, don't you?

It must be jolly too
When taught to walk
That gravitation laws
Our efforts balk.

I 've been a baby once,
And now I pray,—
As simple and as good
E'er be, I may.

THE BUMBLE-BEES' SONG

WHEN Father Adam was inventing bees
Instructions given them were these:
"With zeal the blossoms in a breezy zone
To seek in zigzag paths" and that alone.

They spelled it o'er as we were wont to do
When mother us to market sent.
One day a field of cotton caught their view
That settled in the buds, on business bent.

The fleecy wool filled up their tiny ears,
And all they heard was so confused!
And even after all these many years
They're less by music than by noise
amused.

"With zeal the blossoms in a breezy zone
To seek in zig-zag paths" they sound,
But only got predominating tone,
That's where the bee his orchestra has
found.

A CHILDREN'S SURPRISE PARTY

THERE'S whispered wisdom in the halls,
And candy-man's unusual calls,
The words that heads in silence shake
With thought to make a prophet quake.

The only truly innocent one
Was our dear baby girl. Her curis
Were tangled by no traitorous thoughts
That filled the heads of the other girls.

The hour has come, the foe's at hand,
The garrison unsuspecting too!
Then in they troop by twos and threes,
Meet two reproachful eyes of blue.

As Moses smote the hidden spring,
The influence of the hour rolls 'way
The years that hide my childhood days,
And young again, I join their play.

A Children's Surprise Party 311

As deep attentive to the play
As on the sternest, hardest task,
Completely in the youngsters' sway,
Relieved of age's hated mask.

There 're games with laughter as their goal,
"To Holy City merrily march,"
"To tack the tail on donkey droll,"
"Or creep 'neath Brooklyn's falling arch."

These trivial toys we ne'er forget,
In life a most important part,
To memory's chord the toning fret,
For ear that sweetest hears, our heart.

Then candled cake with knowledge crowned,
And things to form a feast complete;
There 's nothing good that 's left unfound;
The hour with perfect joy 's replete.

But envious Time, averse to joy,
Turns round his head and hastens by;
When sorrow makes our life its toy
With demon-smile Time stops to guy.

"Appreciations " and "Farewells "
That our wishes ne'er did brew
Are said, then the happy hearts depart,
Blessed by two thankful eyes of blue.

WHAT BABY SAW

I N a tree-top tall from molesting man
Three tiny play-chestnuts lay,
In a make-believe burr built of grass,
But were dressed in a different way :

For the tiny babe-chestnuts are covered with
white,
And no alien hues are there,
But these three on this tree sported slight
Tiny touches of blue, bright and fair.

With the time of the opening came a surprise,
And the stranger dropped his disguise ;
A little furred form like a brown powder-puff
In surroundings strange enough

Stands shaking in wonder at the odd world,
Half-afraid, tries not to fly.
And the mother so proud, just returned with
some food,
Sits laughing encouragement by.

LULLABY

DEAR birdies, breathe a soft, sweet song,
For baby wants to sleep;
To keep her thus awake 't is wrong;
She longs from earth to leap
To talk with God awhile,
Already sees Him smile.

And clouds, you eyelids of the moon,
Hide fast in sleep her light,
And bar those beams and blind them soon,
For, stealing through the night
In fleeing from the skies,
They tickle baby's eyes.

O happy honey-bee, your music cease,
'T is time you were abed;
Or think you in the sleeping rose
To steal your hunting head?
We 're watching you now go,
Your song makes sleep come slow.

Sleep, baby, sleep, lest morrow come
'Fore your to-day is done.

The stars are trying to be dim,
That small one 's gone asleep.

The leaves hum murmured hymn,—
“Sleep, baby, angels keep.”

MY WORK IS DONE

COME, little one, my work is done,
I now would talk with thee.
We 'll talk about the setting sun,
The clouds in golden glory;

Or of the moon whose mounts give rise
To stories weird and false:
Of man who, banished to the skies,
Must ever flaunt his faults.

Yes, little one, we must beware
Lest our life 's ridiculed,
For we, as all, a precept wear,
Some life by ours is ruled.

Or tell me tales you hear in sleep
That make you sweetly smile,
Or tell me truths the Lord would keep
As told in Sacred File.

“Thou ’st hid these things from prudent,
wise,

But unto babes revealed.”

Within those thoughtful, guiltless eyes
Is wordless wisdom sealed.

Or teach me how my prayers to raise,

“For from the babies’ lips”

God said, “Thou hast perfected praise.”

I know thy tongue ne’er trips.

BABY AND THE CATERPILLAR

I luv de taterpillar, fuzzy fing,
Dat treeps an' trawls along de road
Jus' like de 'ittle pussy-willow fing
Had dotten loose an' no one knowed.
I see him tomin' toward my toes,
Be tarful, don't ou tom too close!
I 'd like to pat ou, deary ou,
I luv de tater, taterpill—er OO!!

It luks like mamma's boa tollar, too,
All shrinked to a teeny, tiny one;
I wonder what would mamma really do
If her fur tollar start to wun.
Teep back there from my toes,
Be tarful, don't ou tom too close;
I 'd like to pat ou, deary ou,
I luv de tater, taterpill—er OO!!

Or like de frizzly four o'clocks ou blow
To see if mamma wants ou home,
I dess I 'll try dis taterpillar so,

318 Baby and the Caterpillar

I tink his curlies need a comb.
Oh, Oh! How it teeckles my nose,
I fink I like ou not so close!
But I 'll pat ou, deary ou,
I luv de tater, taterpill—er OO!!

BABY'S SKY

OUR baby and I can boast a sky
More lovely than that which meets
the eye

Of wide-awake ocean's upward gaze,
When little folks long have ceased their plays.
In the dome of our fireplace straight-arched
back

That wintry clouds have tinted black
The sputtering sparks form starlets bright,
That shine so real to our dreamy sight.

One touch of the tongs, it bursts into blaze
And a thousand meteors fill the sky,
As oft we've seen after summer days;
And baby appears as though to fly
As little ones do beyond the sky.
But if her fingers a star should clutch
The word they use when stars seem to touch,
Indeed it would be a *syzygy*.

When baby's tired and the fires burn low
The sky reflects a dull red glow,

Like the west on a quiet summer day,
When the sun has nearly burned away ;
And then baby 's 'neath two blackened skies
For she 's clouded those two bright blue eyes
With clouds all black on inner side,
Though prettiest pink on other side.

THE MOTHERLESS DOLL

AH, honored toy, not understanding doom;
 Unteased by Sorrow's needle sharp,
That makes rough the woof of life's loom;
 Grief's untaught fingers on life's harp,
That mar the harmonies just given,
By little angel sent from Heaven;
How blessed art thou! But yesterday
At twilight, when quietly the day
Passed away, in awe the night
 Stood still with shaded eye to weep,
Our babe, our darling, with the light
 Of dying day as if in sleep
Returned to where she just had come.
 Those lips that lisped thee lullabies
Are now to earthly hearing dumb.
 Would thou couldst help my grief
 appease!

These toys that recent held no thought
And no respect, her death hath wrought,
They now are signs of one above,
That plead the care of grieving love.

322 The Motherless Doll

I know thou grieveest, dost thou not,
 As I the loss of fingers fair
Of our loving little tot,
 Those fingers' tender, gentle care
That smoothed the trouble-wrinkled brow,
 The lisping tones sweet comfort gave?
The morn that lit my life just now
 Seems shadowed by that tiny grave,
And touched with twilight gloom;
And silence throned throughout the room
So lately filled with baby fun,
Too mourns the lost life just begun.

FLY AWAY HOME

COME, chimney-swift, and wing your way
To your nest, quick fly away!
Capricious April hath hid her smile,
For building she did beguile,
But now the day grows dark and cold,
Do be warned by what you 're told!

The farm-house folk have made a fire
In the fireplace 'neath your nest,
Your home of twigs 's in danger dire,
The young ones are all at rest;
Fly then, alarm your sleeping fold,
Do be warned by what you 're told!

Lose not a moment, make all haste,
Your children are all alone,
The heat it may dissolve the paste
That binds your nest to the stone,
And from their high home on the wall
In the fire your young may fall!

THE HOME OF THE THRUSH

A HOUSE of needles. Strange, you say?
And well, indeed, you may.
But deep within the shaded wood
There lives a bird who wears a hood,
Within a nest of pine-cone made,
And coarsest grass that cannot fade.

But very bashful is this bird,
Almost as hard to see
As Santa Claus when to give him word
You shout with glad but anxious glee
Into the fireplace chimney dark,
And sit for hours saying "Hark!"

And happy is this home alway,
O'er bills don't bother they.
(Your father 'll tell you that 's a pun,
But ask him, just for sake of fun,
If he worms from his bills all day
And sleeps at night on honest hay.)

The Home of the Thrush 325

When evening dyes the cloth of day

 This tail-er leaves his task,

To needled home then *threads* his way;

 No couch of painted soft damask;

But joy can furnish any nest

With comforts good as in the best.



TRIFLES

The tares that thrust intruding feet
Into the sacred courts of wheat.



EPITAPH TO MY VERSES

I AGOS of a foolish fancy born,
The dust of thoughts well worthy in
themselves,
In mills of diction all their *flower* is shorn,
For thoughts are modest, uncommitting
elves.

And, after reading, if a fate forlorn
You deem deserved, with care place on
your shelves,
And dust return to dust. And o'er them
write:—

Tuned by a traveller whom *roams* inspired,
But Nero-like no nearer fame, though light
Of *burning energy* by impulse fired
Illumed the path ambition made so bright.

OUR INHERITANCE

DAME NATURE willed a wreath to men,
One side she wove of poppies red,
Dear consolation's sign; and then
The other bound with brambles dread,
That wear insignia of remorse.
Capricious maid, she knew not of its force,
For poppies soon will disappear and fade,
But brambles do perennial life parade.

THE SHEARS OF ATROPOS

SOME lives should think it a blessed thing
That shears that cut their string
Are not the kind for button-holes!
That she don't measure by their souls
And cut to fit what they put in!

MY FIREPLACE

MY warmest and my truest friend,
How oft we sit together,
With sparkling dialogue defend
'Gainst critic's chilling weather.

I oft have tendered you my rhyme,
Afraid to show another;
When I to comic verse would climb
I feared that you would smother;

Or some sarcastic ode relieved
You grew so cold and gloomy,
Although "put out," I most believed
You but moaned the lost fame with me.

SAMBO'S TROUBLES

“NOW Liza, jus' you listen
Till I 's told dis story you,
Listen car'ful so 's you 'll hear,
For it beat me, 'deed it do.

“Las' night I druv de massa
To de lectur' in de hall;
'Now, Sambo,' says de massa,
'Har 's some money, you come, too.'

“So 's I went in to hear dat man,
An' hars him talk such stuff
Dat 'fore he fru dis nigga say:
'Jus' let me go, I 's hed enuff.'

“But massa say dat I no go,
So 's I listen, scared clean fru,
For dat ol' man he do talk so
'Bout things on arth and things below.

“He ’tol us ’bout the Atom
Infinit and could n’t be seen,
All things, includin’ Adam,
Done start by dat same thing.

“When I druv de massa home
I looks out very car’ful like,
Fo’ he said dat Atoms roam
In eb’ry thing we see.

“I went to bed, but I ’s no sleep,
So ’s out I got my bigges’ gun
An’ sets me up a guard to keep
(With plenty room so ’s I could run).

“Las’ sees an object I
Jus’ like dat Atom looks;
I fired de gun and ’t aint no lie,
I runs like sixty, dat did I.

“Arly in de mornin’
Comes de massa dredful mad,
For his bestes’ Sunda’ jacket
Shot to pieces dat I hed.

“But I doan quite see fru it,
Fo’ de fust thing dat he say,—
‘Sec, you crazy lump of ebonit,
My bestes’ coat ALL IN ATOMS
LAY!’ ”

THE LITERATURE OF THE SEA-BEACH

(To my reader : I have not my dictionary at hand, but I take "Literature" as being the noun formed from the verb "to litter," and meaning "that which is strewn.")

I SEE while strolling o'er the beach such
sights

As call forth memories of my books.

The spider-crab a monster e'en me frights,

What an ideal Iago he looks!

And by some chance near-by a toad-fish lies,

To fancy quick the story flies

That gnome of Notre-Dame conception
gives,

A homelier creature scarce there lives,

Yet character from form is ne'er designed.

And frightfully near my foot I find

An old wax doll that moves and tries to rise!

Is Frankenstein before mine eyes?

'T is but a frozen crab thrown on the strand,

Near covered by the doll and sand,

And waxing warm within his forcèd grave

336 Literature of the Sea-Beach

In *crabbèd* humor seeks escape.
Some wave has broken in a sand-bank, too,
And *dollars* lie in piles around;
If Holmes were only here to catch a clew,
If all the proofs were not now drowned!
And that? Why Harum must have been
 around;
The *trade-winds* have a sea-horse thrown
In stormy weather on the eager ground,
It lies as still now as a stone.
And many more books might I lay indeed
Upon the *shelving* beach, but I prefer
That you, too, go and see what you can read.
So go to sea, for there occur
The objects bathed in mystery, and all
Can tell a tale if you but read.
Forgotten study, too, they may recall,
All in their wise but silent creed.
'T is why from frequent educating talks,
I call my "Litter-at-your-Walks."

LOGARITHMS

MY lumbering mind can woo not thee,
O maid of mighty mind,
My efforts are declined.
My versing must entirely be
To scan the light log-rhythms
Of high holes' timèd beat.

ODE TO JOHN JONES .

“JOHN JONES? Yeah, thet ’s my name,
and uf the same

I hev a son, a right smart un,
Who ’s allers writin’ po’ms; wal, I doan claim
Ter know a nothin’ ’bout sich things, but
my son

Wus called one day while writin’ and I jist
peeked

Ter see what sort uf stuff it wus. What
wus ’t

Yer say? Ha! Ha!

But he ’s my son, a right smart un.

Wal, shinin’ brightly frum thet paper top
These wurds so full uf feelin’ I hed ter stop
An’ shed a tear, the same I hev’ nt done
Since Dolly died. But, stranger, he ’s my
son.

He writ “Ode to John Jones,” thet ’s me!
you see,

His father, me! I did n’t read no more,

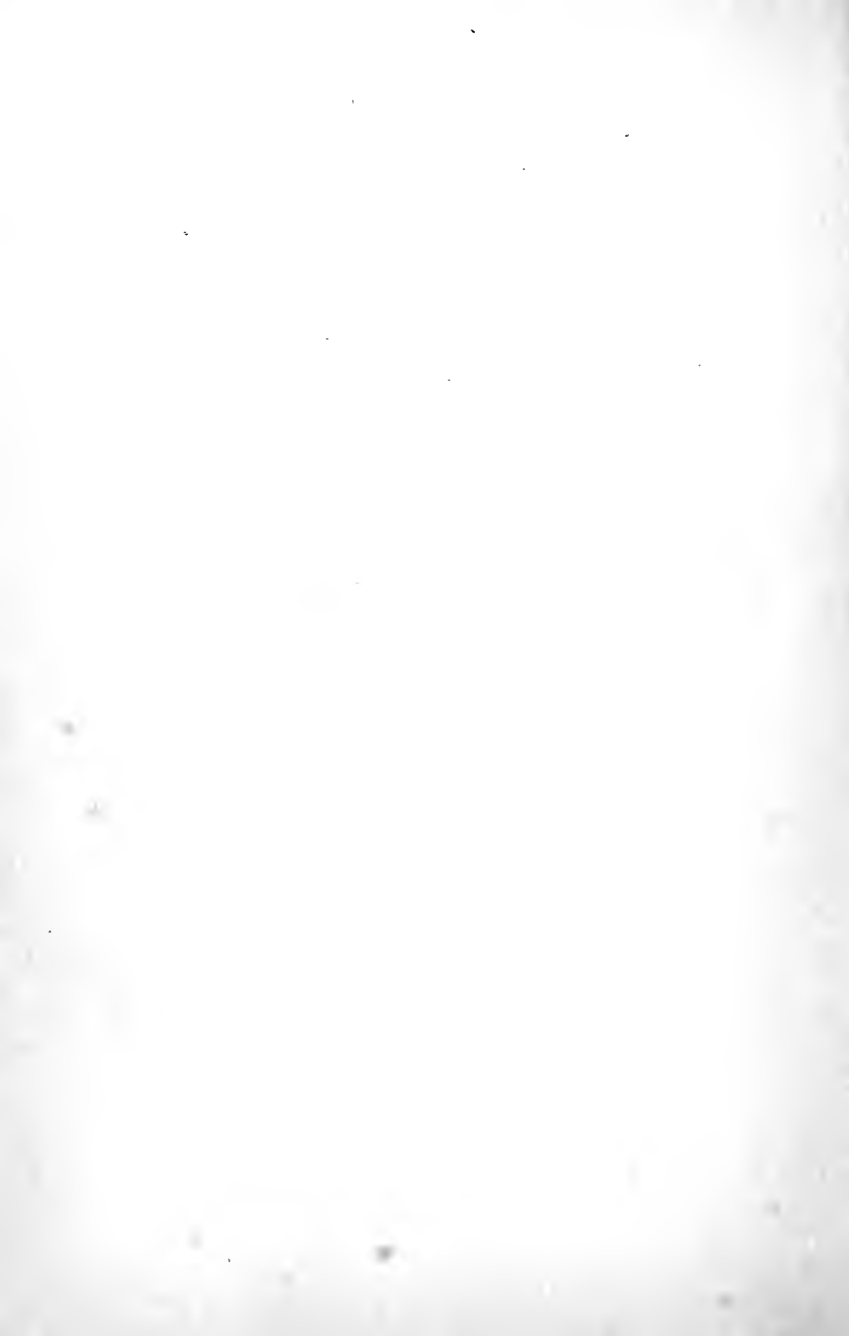
But saw the wurds "Hayseed" and "Pop,"
 bless me
He jist meant "crop," and "Hayseed 's" jist
 his farmin' lore.

I tell yer, stranger, if all sons but knowed
Jist all that they to their fathers ode,
How happy men would be! And I'm so
 proud

 About thet son (sich a smart un)
Thet seems I must jist tell it to the crowd.

 I hope when John hes got a son
He too will 'preciate what my son owns,
The orful lot thet he "ode to John Jones."

THE END.













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